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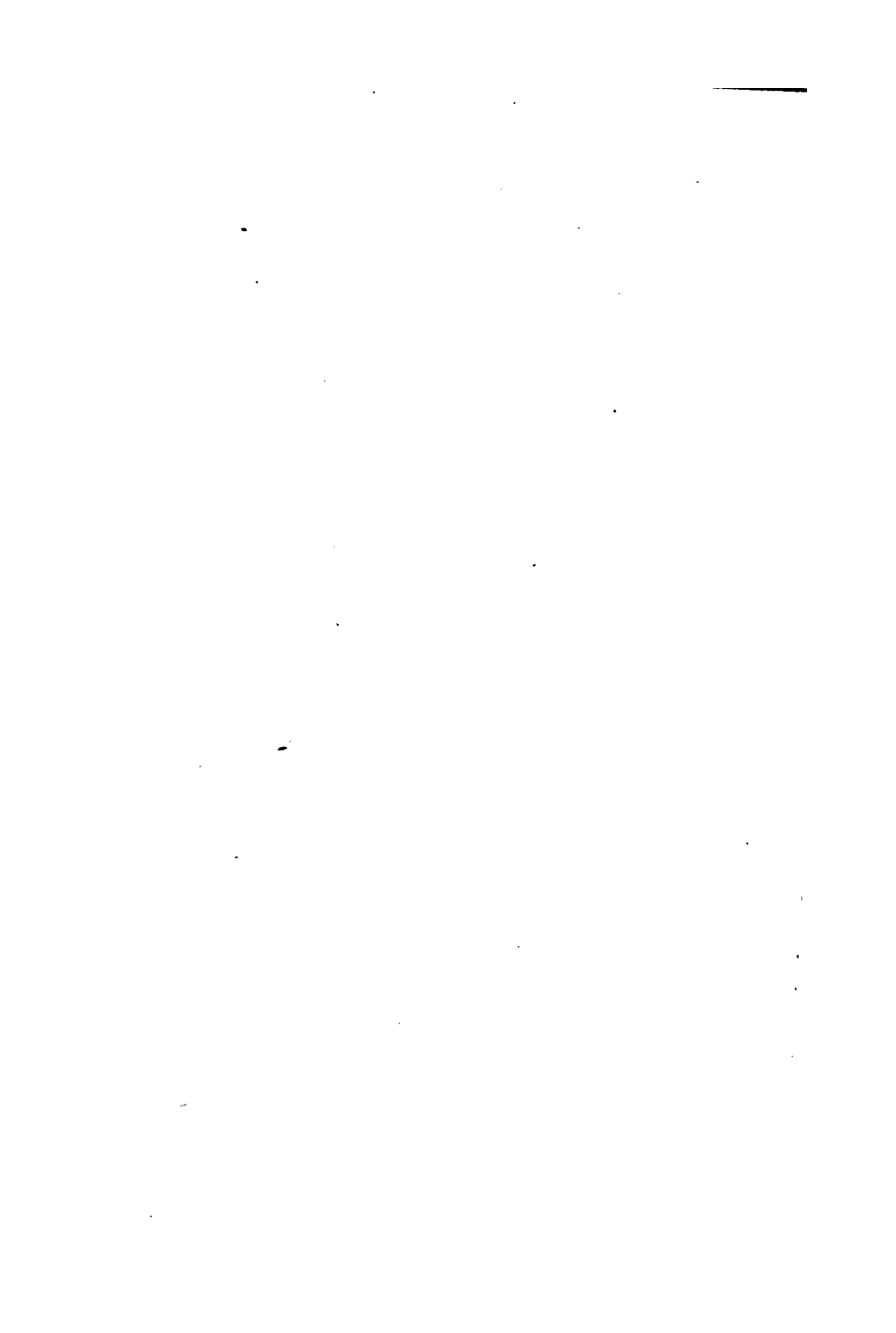
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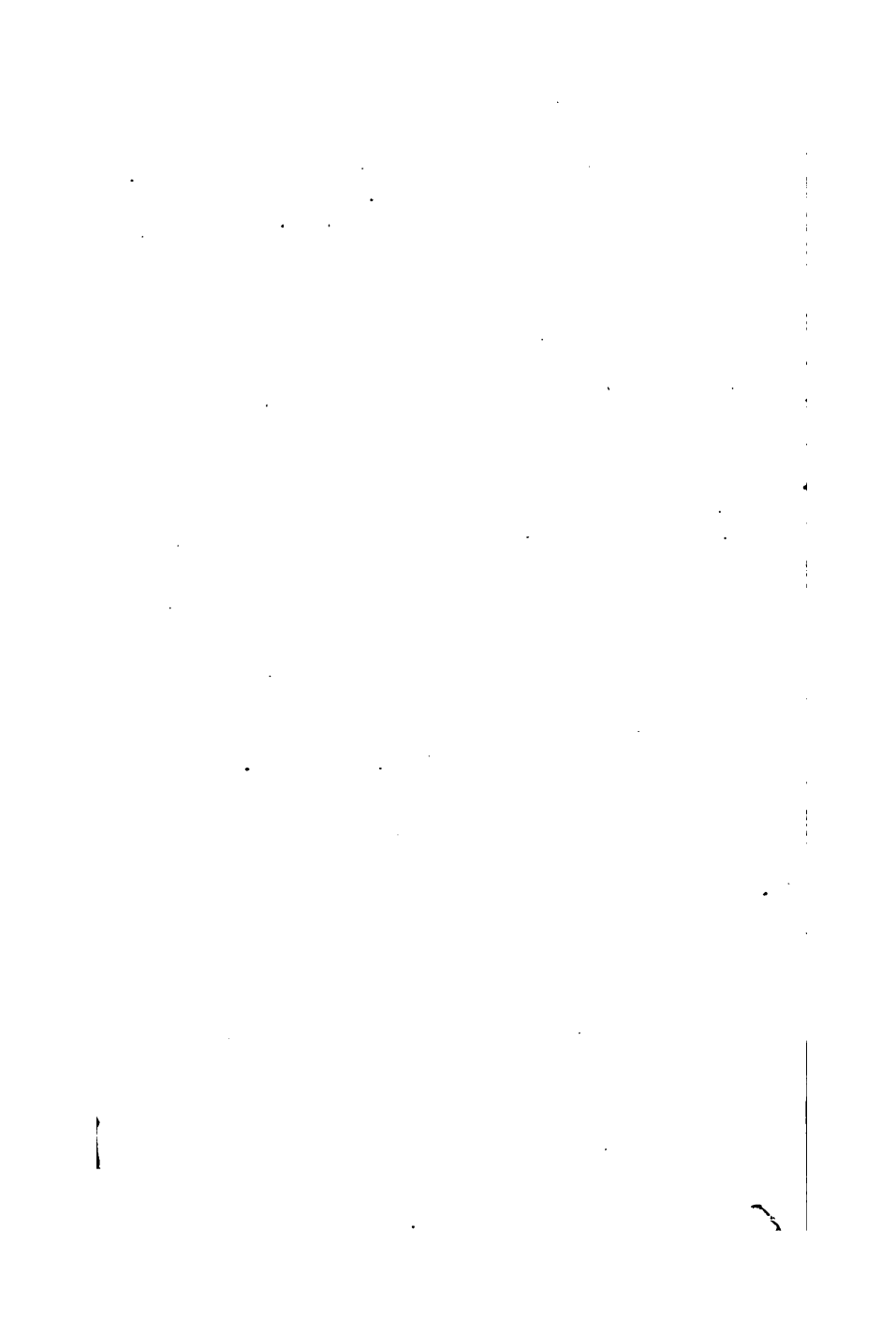




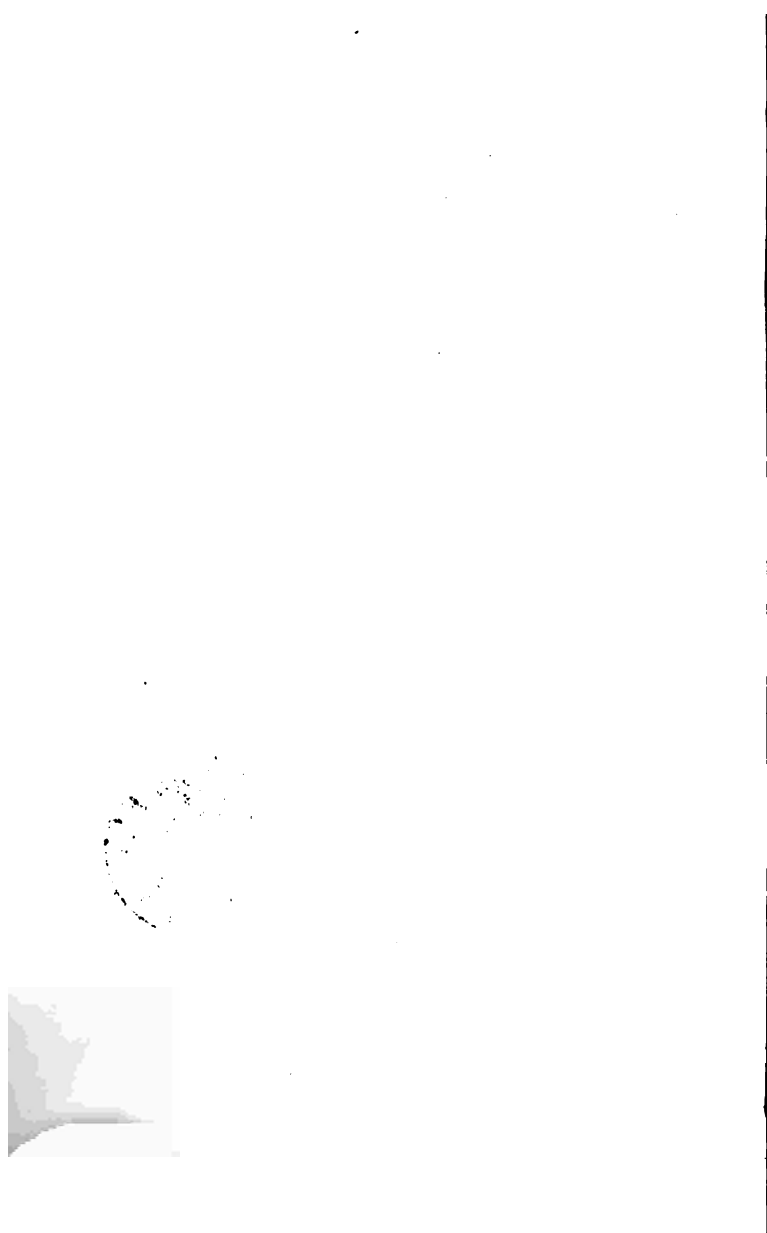
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MURIEL AND OTHER POEMS.



MURIEL,
THE SEA-KING'S DAUGHTER;
AND OTHER POEMS.

BY
FREDERICK EDWARD WEATHERLY.

*What is writ is writ,—
Would it were worthier!*

BYRON.



OXFORD:
T. SHRIMPTON & SON, 23 & 24 BROAD STREET.
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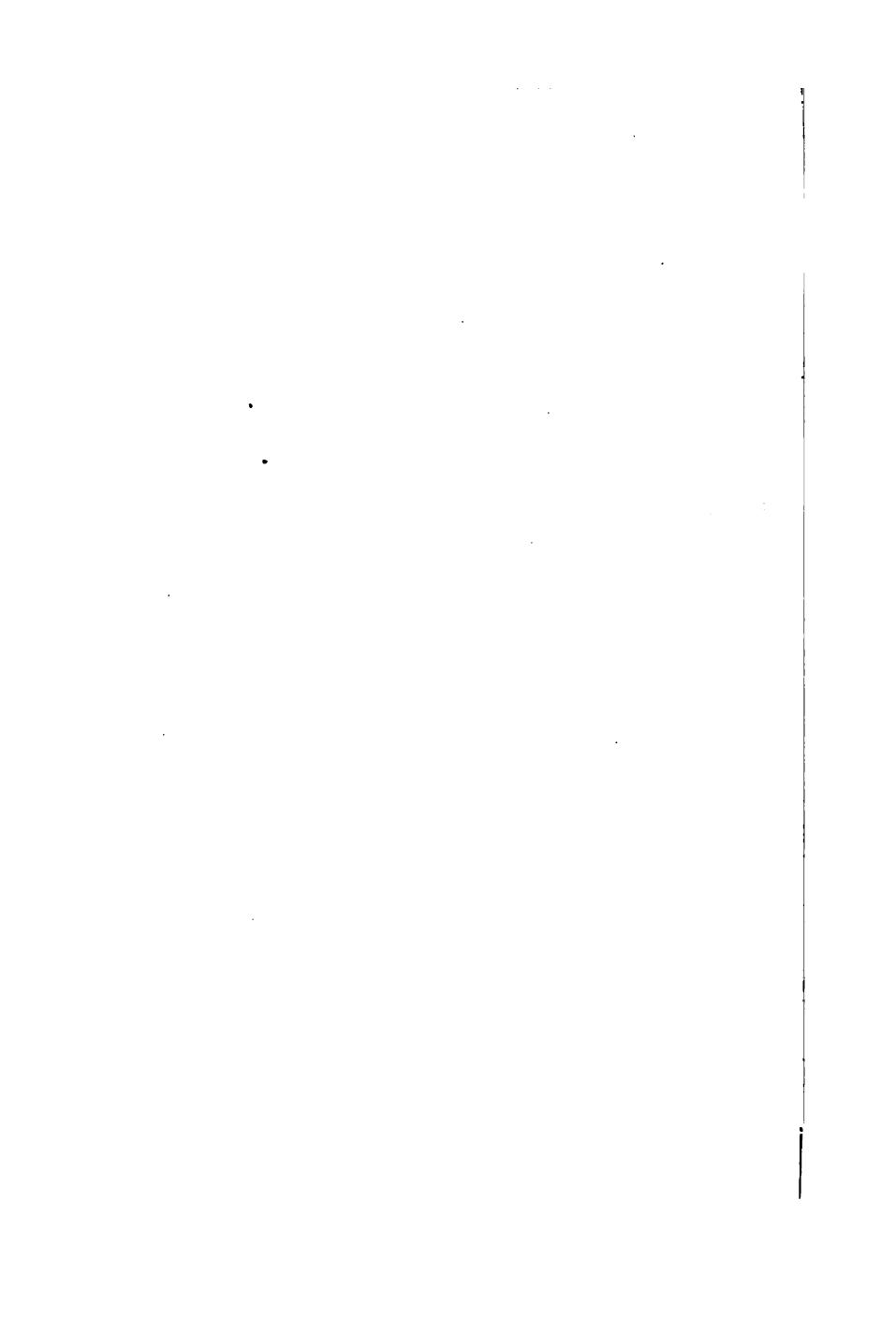
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MURIEL,
THE SEA-KING'S DAUGHTER.

PRELUDE.

WITHIN his halls upon a marble throne
Sat, quaffing, Waldemar the old sea-king,
And, on her ivory distaff, gold-inlaid,
Spinning soft wool, his queen was at his side.
Adown the palace, fair, in order ranged
'Gainst carven crystal columns other thrones
Draped with fine linen and rich broidery,
The cunning work of deft sea-maidens' hands,
Shone for the senators, what time they moved
To council, or to banquet of the king.
And round about was laid a garden, sweet
With sweetest flowers, and trees, and luscious fruits
Of divers colours; marble maidens gleamed

In naked beauty 'mid the flowers ; and walls
Of red bright coral pierced with silver gates
Compassed the space ; and over all there lay
The glassy greenness of the ancient sea.

Far in her maiden-chamber, where she sat,—
Muriel, the sea-king's daughter, lovely-browed,—
Came, softened by the watery space it passed,
The moonlight, bearing in each filmy shaft
Faint memories of tales she once had heard
Sung by a stranger bard on such an eve :
—A bright-haired youth, who sang of that fair world
Whose iron basements, planted in the deeps,
She oft had seen in wonder : and her heart
Was filled with yearning, might she but behold
For one short hour that distant storied world.
Oft too her sisters made her yearning more
With words of all they saw, when as they rose
To the sea's bosom ; for to them was given
Right by the dwellers in the ancient sea,
Being of full womanhood, to yearly rise,
And see that other world : but Muriel pined,

And chid her eighteen summers, and would fain
Run quickly through the allotted tale of years,
To see the green wide earth, the blue fair sky,
The flowered meadow-slopes, and dim warm woods,
The yellow sands the which her own sea kissed,
And all the wondrous happy things of earth.

So sat she musing ; till her maidens came
With noiseless footsteps reverend : then she rose,
And they unrobed her : one by one they loosed
Her rich robe's jewelled clasps ; adown it fell
Unto her white feet rustling, and she stood
Unclad, save for her waves of golden hair.
Then in her couch they laid her body sweet,
Sang a low song, and left her, murmuring
“ Good night, sweet mistress ! ” and again, “ Good
night ! ”

But when the falling curtains hid the last
Retiring maiden, and e'en now the last
Faint footfall died adown the stair, she lay
Sleepless long whiles, nor did night's calm divine

Slide down into her bosom. Ever moved
Her warm limbs restless ; and her waves of hair
O'er coverlet and pillow wildly streamed.
“ Ah me ! ” she sighed, “ what wills this mine unrest ?
Joy ? Is it joy or sorrow ? truth I deem
Somewhat is coming on me passing strange.
Why comes not slumber to my tired sad eyes ?—
Slumber that heals all care, all toil, all woe,
Sweet slumber— ” On her parting rosy lips
The words had death, and o'er her drowsy eyes
Their delicate curtains drooped and drooped and
closed.

And o'er the couch and fragrant room was calm,
Stirred only by the throbbing of her heart :
And in the couch was Love's most perfect maid ;
A sight in sooth to make a man's hot blood
Leap fiery surging with desire, and sow
A maiden's soul with seeds of jealousy ;
Fine threads of gold on lacework pillow spread,
White slender hands on broidered coverlet,
Soft slumbrous bosom, kissed with faint rosebloom,
Rising and falling with the life within,

Like gentle pulsing of a summer sea.
So slept she : while the silent hours divine
Crept onward, till night wore into bright day.

Morn : and the palace woke ; the risen sun
Looked through the tremulous blue sea, and saw
The senators thronging round about the king
For council ; looked and shot a dazzling ray,
Through maiden Muriel's chamber lattices,
Upon her eyelids, as in hopes to win
Radiance from those bright eyes.

Anon she slipped
From her warm couch, as from the white foam moves
The golden sun, or mellow harvest-moon
From gray white cloud-banks : so she rose, and
passed,
When robed, to presence of the mother queen.

In midmost of her maidens sat the queen,
Her deft hands spinning busy, as her wont ;
So too the maidens ; all their chattering tongues
Were stayed ; for one who sat anear the queen,

Sent sweet along the chamber a soft song
Of kings and queens of eld, and glorious deeds
Done by the dwellers in the ancient sea.

On the gold threshold Muriel shyly paused,
Holding the purple curtain : her small feet
Checked, and her face bent forward, for she saw
The queen's face shadowed with a chiding cloud.
"Nay, chide me not," she pleaded, "mother mine!
I was so weary. Long long whiles I lay
Unresting—do not chide me!" and therewith
Entering, she passed, and stood beside the queen.

So, whiles the senators sat round the king,
On weighty matters counselling, they span—
That bevy of fair women, till the noon
Was brightest; then the maidens sped
To business of the palace; and the queen
Was left with Muriel alone. The king
Came afterwhiles from council, and the twain
Found there still spinning. Muriel anon
Lifted her voice, and through the silence brake :

“O father, why may I not rise and see,
E'en for one hour, that distant storied world,
Whose iron basements planted in the deeps
I oft have seen in wonder—the fair sky,
And all the wondrous happy things of earth ?
Why tarry here long nights, and longer days,
Pent in the same old rooms, the rustling sea
Lapping the same old opal lattices,
The same old palace garden spaces girt
With weary walls of coral ?” The king snapt
Her thread of murmuring, and spake : “My child,
Ask not the reason : be content to know
That such is the eternal covenant,
Fixed by the dwellers in the ancient sea,
That none, until they come to twenty years,
Rise hence to visit the far world.” He spake
And strode with great strides kingly from the place.

Thereat stepped Muriel down the patined floor,
Into the marble corridor ; and thence,—
Lingering a moment where a deep niche held
The gold fine harp of him the stranger bard,—

She glided like a sunbeam down the stairs
That slanted to the garden : there she roamed
Long through the warm bright afternoon ; till eve
Came gray-stoled through the sea, and therewith
came

From their hushed chambers Muriel's sisters, glad
At thoughts of rising : for their wont it was
With evenfall in wreathèd choir to rise
To the sea's bosom ; there to float and gaze
Shoreward across the foam's white curves, and blend
The soft moon's silver with their locks of gold.

So up the blue clear waves their bodies sweet
Moved wavering, rosy white, and as they moved,
Poor little Muriel plaining watched and watched
Till distance screened them ; then to her own room
Quick mounting tarried. Whither afterwhiles
Her sisters, flushed with fresh of air above,
Came and stood round the couch where she was laid,
And, at her quest, thus one of them 'gan speak :
" We lay against a reach of yellow sand

'Mid the foam fringe : to leftward ran a pier
Of open black gaunt piles, wherethrough the wind
Sang a sweet monotone ; and right and left
Rose through the night a city's thousand roofs
Tipped with the wan moon's silver ; and, like stars
Dropt earthward, twinkled green and crimson lamps,
These in long lines, and those in circles ranged
As 'twere some giant amphitheatre.
And, as we lay, there came the sound of bells
Clashed musical : and, when they ceased, their void
Was filled with voices, and ever and anon
Bursts as of silver trumpets blown to heaven
Rang on the night-wind : and we heard them still
Made faint by distance, e'en when we 'gan sink
Homeward adown the tremulous blue sea."
And long did Muriel think she heard them too,
After her sisters had passed forth to rest ;
And mingled dreams were round her all the night :
Moonlitten cities, coloured lamps, and bells,
Voices, and trumpets, blent confusedly,
To her a wondrous medley : so she slept.

Such was the simple life these maidens lived,
Far from earth's weary clamour, in the sea ;
And days grew into weeks, weeks into months,
Till Muriel reached at length her heart's desire,
The landmark of her life, the twenty years.

BOOK I.

It was the evening of her natal day,
And Muriel stood within her chamber walls,
Impatient : for the long-wished hour was come
To visit earth. Her 'tiring maidens tried
Now this, now that soft robe of silk to suit
The shifting fancies of her mind ; now hung
A scarf of gauze, with gold and crimson fringe
Inwoven, now a pale green gossamer,
Now sheenest blue with folds all silver-starred,
Around her dazzling shoulders ; but as soon
Fell this, fell that upon the chamber floor
Rejected (maidens truth are hard to please) ;
Lastly she took with her own hands a robe
Of whitest samite, fragrant from its home.

A cedarn coffer ; took and clasped it round
Her white throat by its carven jewelled clasp,
And let her gold hair from a blue bright band
Stream sunlightwise, and two fine crystal shoon
Slipped on her dainty little rosy feet ;
And, 'tired at length, passed eagerly below.
There, farewell taking of the king and queen
And sisters (for she had said " I fain would go
Alone, my sisters,") up the blue clear waves
Her body sweet moved wavering, rosy white,
Till the strange air was round her, as she lay
Lapped in the salt foam 'neath the purple night.
So lay she, while the voiceless queen-moon clomb
The heaven's grand arch amid her courtier stars.
I could not tell of the great joy she had,
Joy of a life-long wish at length attained,
Joy of a traveller at an hostel door
After long journeying many a weary mile.
Landward her greedy eyes looked longingly,
Drank in the strange moonlitten view of earth,
Heard the waves' rush upon a shining shore,
Heard voices faint sent seaward far from land,

Saw the great glory of the heavens, dim hills
Mantled with haze of silver, pine forests
Weird black and giant, domes and high swart
towers,

Saw and was rapt,—when slowly slowly moved
From westward a great vessel, by the tide
Borne towards her, for of wind was none to stir
The idle canvas. Black against the moon
The taper yard-arms showed; wherefrom down-
swung

Lamps pendulous, white, yellow, red, and blue,
Purple, and green: gold-broidered tapestry
Covered the bulwarks: helmwards of the ship
A snowy silken awning stretched, whereof
The shadow on the smooth deck flickering joined
The tremulous shadows of a crew, that danced
To merry music sent into the night;
And all within and on the ship was gay
And festive, as the ship of a great king.

So strange a sight had Muriel never seen,
So passing beautiful: but her curious soul

Let her not long at distance stay to view
The vessel, but, with eager arms and breast
Oaring the waves, she drew anigh. The hull
Looked trebly large and black ; at the curved stern
The bright squares of a cabin window, set
Low on the waves, showed litten from within ;
And, in the watery mirror, stretched beneath,
A second window showed ; where Muriel swam,
And, giving her pink bosom to the air,
Rose to the ship's ledge, whereto her soft hands
Clung ; and the curtains, being part withdrawn,
Yielded her strained eyes entrance : so she peeped.
And oh ! the which she saw did make her heart
Open its doors to feelings erst unknown.
Full in the light, upon a crimson couch,
His dark locks curling o'er an ivory brow,
He lay—the ship's young lord. From the far dusk,
Whither the silver lamp's light reached not, came,
Tuned to a cithern's string, a maiden-voice,
Singing a song, so low, so monotone,
It seemed a crooning cradle-lullaby.
And Muriel's heart spake unto her, and said,

That she had never seen so fair a face ;
And " Oh to be that maiden there with him,
With him alone to listen to her voice !"
And " Oh that she might humbly even stand
The servant of his beck ! far better so
Than homeward sink far out of his dear sight !"
In sooth I might not tell of all she thought,
And all she wished in that strange golden time.
He was the god whereof her dreams had been ;
A prince of earth, whose feet did tread that earth,
That earth, her yearning's goal ; he was her god ;
And, with weak maiden worship, did she bow
Her self, and soul, and being, unto his :
While meantime he lay listening within
To her who sang, nor recked of her without.

Meanwhiles far out to westward rose dark banks
And leaden bars of cloud, that grew and grew
To blacker bars and banks athwart the sky.
Came from the waves a growing rumbling sound,
That seemed to lift them as they swelled and rolled ;

And from the sky a sougning ; then long sobs ; then
 blasts

Tempestuous, and the calm of Night divine,
Vanquished, to other happier places fled ;
And sea and sky were wedded, while mad winds
Raved nuptial chants : and storm was over all.
O then the good ship groaned to her stout heart,
And through the rent sails—spread in haste to catch
The first breath of the rising traitor wind—
The great night yawned, and the yellow lightning
 glare

Grinned hideous triumphing ; and, her frightened
 face

Hiding, leapt Muriel down the broken waves.

Not long, and thoughts of the fair youth outdrove
Terror for self, and, to the open plain
Of ocean mounting, she beheld, and lo !
The storm was overpast, and waves and wind
Were only sobbing now, as in regret
For their mad rage : but where was the good ship ?
Where the young lord, and where the festive crew ?

Found Muriel answer in a thousand spars,
And planks, rent sails, and masts confusedly blent
In one wild welter down the sweeping brine.

Anon of a great yard-arm was she ware,
And to it clung a face and hands she knew,
Pale, hopeless, griping with the last vain clutch
Of a spent swimmer: then did her young heart
Leap forth to save him, and her eager arms
The strong sea clove, obedient to her heart.
But, as she reached him, as for dead he fell
Into as sweet a bosom and as clinging arms
As ever made man happy; so he lay;
And she—her gold hair on his foam-drenched
brow,
His dark hair drifting on her bosom sweet,
Swam on to shoreward: ever did she think
“If he be dead, O then in the cold earth
They’ll lay him, and I shall never see him more!
If he be dead! ah me!” and then she kissed
His icy lips and brow a many times.

So swam she, while her loving blue eyes fell
Now on her marble burthen, now far off,
Strained towards a headland, pinewood-clad, that rose
Sheer from a yellow sand-beach, kissed o' the sea ;
Swam on untiring ; and the wind was dropt
To a faint rustling, and the calmèd sea
Ran from her glowing form, while nearer now
The headland with the morning light was red.

Isled in green garden, bright of flowers and grass,
That, leftward of the headland, seaward sloped,
And took the winds, a temple white there was
Of dazzling marble. Fifty shallow stairs
Rose from the garden to the pillars' base,
That led into the sacred calm within.
The back and either side whereof were green
And glimmering dark with trees : and in whose front
A level, sundered by a river, ran
Down to a rose-walk, fragrant, close-impeached :
And, beyond this, the yellow beach, whereon
A bevy of fair maidens roamed at will.
Clad in most happy-coloured robes they were,

Thin, soft, and cloud-like, following line for line
The delicate moulding of each supple limb :
And here a bare pink bosom gleamed to heaven,
And here bare little rosy feet, that shone,
Daintily set amid the lucky grass.

One lay beneath a tree-bole, half in grass,
Half couched on lilies ; and the sunlight lay
Thick on the trees ; and, pushing soft aside
The frail leaf-hands, and, softening into rays
Of faintest green and gold commingled, fell,
Like gold dust, on the shadowed form below.

Yet farther down, on the broad basin's marge,
Wherefrom the river seaward leapt and sang,
Another maiden was. Nigh standing, might you see
Nought of her face, for on her breast she lay ;
And o'er her shapely shoulders gleamed her hair,
Whence peeped a white glimpse of two rounded arms
Whereon she leaned. But, bending down to gaze
Into the water, there, in crystal set,
And framed with blue of heaven, and yet again

With inner frame of brown hair, might you see
A rosy dimpled maiden-face, shown sweet
From out its watery mirror: two blue eyes,
An ivory neck, two lips for kissing made,
All lit with gladness of bright smiles, that seemed
To bid you follow down the lucid depth.

So the two maidens lay, one 'neath the tree,
One nigh the stream; while ever and anon
Bursts of gay laughter, flung on the morning air
From maiden-lips, rose up, and echoing passed
Along the quiet garden, from the beach.
There the rest sported, running to and fro
Over the smooth-prest sand; each pelting each
With blossom-wreaths; while yonder on the bluff
The sun smote redly, and the tide ran in,
And with the sea-wind all the place was glad.

Treading the moist marge of the stream, that flowed
A silver braid upon the garden's green,
And reaching unto where the rose-walk made
The garden's limit, you would pass beneath

The rose-walk's thickest ; where both flower and leaf
Were most and sweetest, being close arched about,
And opening wide its murmurous shade, to give
River and foot-path passage through the cool.
Wherefrom, reluctant moving into light,
Through gray rocks dark with sea-weed, wider grown,
The river, racing seaward, leapt and sang,
And, where the gray rocks left a little bay
Of yellow foam-wet sand, yet wider, joined
The restless bosom of the flashing sea.

Thereto, with oarage of glad arms, nigh spent
To yielding, through the blue bright beaten waves,
Swam Muriel thankful : and a little while
With eyes half sad, half happy, eager watched
The rushing of the longest wave ; and then,
Kissing him thrice upon his eyes and mouth,
From the young prince's body slow unwound
Her lingering arms, and drew her hair away,
Sighing, o'er her sad shoulders from his face,
And kissed him thrice again on mouth and eyes,
And then did loose him ; and the long wave bore

His body safely up the sand, while she
Did fall a-weeping, sad that he was gone,
Yet with glad tears, to know he was escaped
The bitter swallowing of the greedy sea.
— Watched weeping, weeping, for she might not pass
Out of the waves, unto the happy shore
That cradled him ; might no more touch and kiss
In hope to wake him, all his dark long hair ;
Nor in her twined arms hold him any more.

E'en at that time, while Muriel watched and wept,
Forth from behind the headland burst the sun,
Atween two rosy bars of cloud, and loosed
A golden arrow on the marble face
Laid on the shingles : and two eyelids oped,
And let the golden messenger pass in.
But, as they oped, quick through the sunlight flashed
A wreath of blossoms, finding a wet home
Upon his bosom : followed by the ring
Of laughter ; then the gleam of twinkling feet,
And beauteous arms, and happy-coloured robes,
And many a second sunshine of bright hair.

Thereat the prince, scarce rising on weak hands,
Looked up, astonished. Quick the laughter changed
To little shrieks of fear. The twinkling feet
Far 'mid the roses in a moment gleamed,
Save hers, who sought the flower-wreath, and whose
hand
Had flung it, lighting unto such strange hap.

But drawing nigh, she saw the eyes were closed,
And head dropt down, as weary of the work
Of rising ; but his lips were stirred with life.
And, as she bent, her hair's gold threads did sweep
His white face, and her rounded arms stole warm
About his neck ; while yonder on the bluff
The sun smote redly, and the place shone bright,
Fresh with the wind ; and Muriel watched and
wept.

At last—and a most weary while it seemed
To her who lapped him and to her who wept,—
Warmed by the sunlight, and the happy rain
Of soft showered kisses one could only give,

And the fresh winds and loving hands that chafed,
Roland,—so was he named, a prince that ruled
A rich land east across the tossing seas,—
Woke into life, and sunshine ; woke, and gazed
At her whose arms were round him, and she smiled :
Whereat he drew her bright face down to his,
And kissed her lips and eyes a many times,
Saying she was his saviour ; but for her
He had been swallowed of the greedy sea ;
And held her hair over her happy face,
Twisting it round his hands, and looked at her
Through the gold veil, and saw his dark eyes flash
Mirrored in hers, and cheeks with kissing red ;
And Muriel, watching, saw, and heard, and wept.

Afterawhiles came trooping down the shore—
Their fears by curious thoughts outdriven—the rest,
And found the twain. Anon uprose the prince,
Folding his arm round her he ‘ saviour ’ called,
And circled by the wondering maidens passed
By moist marge of the river gardenwards,
Erst looking with a shudder o’er the sea.

And Muriel, where she floated, thought he looked
And saw her, knowing not that mortal eyes
And mortal ears are powerless to heed
Aught of the dwellers in the ancient sea.
Yet, as he looked, where was her white sad face,
Belike some rainy April-dawn lit up
With streaks of gold, himseemed, in one small space,
The foam was whiter, tinged with faintest gold.

Then, as the envious rose-walk took the throng,
And fainter came the voices dying off,
Till one was only ringing in her ears :
“ She was his saviour, but for her (that other)
He had been swallowed of the greedy sea,”
She sobbed aloud, veiling her streaming face ;
While they, far in the garden, only heard
The sea cry somewhat louder, or the wind.
And drawing her hair about her eyes to screen
The last sight of that glad long-yearned-for earth,
Not all so proven—for her palace-home
Clove the blue waves, while low the sea-wind sang
“ O sad and sweet, sad maiden Muriel !”

BOOK II.

THINK now that thrice the sun hath risen and set,
That three fresh morns and three gray eves have been
Sundered by three green golden afternoons,
Since you did hear the sea-wind lowly sing
Over sad Muriel, as she homeward sank :
And in that time unto her present dole
Fresh knowledge, cloaked with sorrow, hath been
given.

For so it fell, that when she told the queen
Touching her strange hap, and the dole she had,
The queen burst out impatient, deeming so
To turn her idle love with rough-shaped words.
“ What ! love a mortal ! one who cannot hear
Or see thee ! Nay, e’en haply knowing not

That there be dwellers in the ancient sea.
What recks he of thy gold hair or white arms
That were about him ? He felt nought but waves,
Heard nought but singing of the foam ; heard not
Thy silly sighings or thy tears ! Come, child,
Live we content with this our own estate,
Nor envy mortals. They with woe and toil
Strive on, that they may bring their souls to live
Somewhere in joy, after cold death hath called them.
Not such our life. We have no souls. We live
Gay for our giv'n span, and then fall on sleep,
And passing melt to foam of the old sea.
Hence these sad looks ! To-night is feast in hall,
(E'en now the lamps are flashing, and the hum
And work of preparation grows apace,)
And many a distant palace-hall will send
Their sea-kings' princes, goodly youths and fair,
Right noble suitors, worthy thrice the love
Thou wastest on this mortal, that scarce power
Obtains to live against our glorious sea.
See to it, child ! our years are nearly run,
Thy sire's and mine, and we would see thee wed

Unto some noble sea-king, as is meet,
Or e'er we melt to foam of the old sea."

She spake, and passed : leaving her seated there,
Muriel, disconsolate, on her fair couch-side,
Fine-carven, ivory ; her little feet
Swaying, reflected in the polished floor ;
Her face in her two hands, that oozing tears,
Like dew-pearls some faint-coloured rose, made wet.

Whom, in this woeful wise and companied
Of woeful thoughts, her sisters found ; nor failed
In questionings, but talked and pitied her,
And pitied her, and questioned yet again ;
Till to the chamber from the hall uprose
The wreathed shells' blare, that told the dance begun.
Whereat they, twining arms, together moved
Bright down the stairs : but, as they paused awhile
On the gold threshold, Muriel slipped aside
Unnoticed from the music, and the glare,
The mazy gleamings, and the perfumed halls,
Towards the quiet garden. There she sat,

Her arms about a marble statue wreathed,
Calling it "Roland;" and to its cold cheek
Her cold cheek holding, while her great tears ran
Over the marble, e'en as though it wept.
And ever came the uproar from the halls,
And ever and anon she gazed aloft
Up through the waves, and vainly thought she saw
His vessel, as each vessel dimly passed.
And night wore on, and presently she slept;
And, while she slept, Roland took ship and sailed
Eastward for home across the tossing seas.

Now to that garden, bright of flowers and grass,
Where was the temple, and the shore whereon
Woke Roland into life, I would you lead,
If not yet all too weary to give ear,
That I might tell you all that there did hap.

Him, wet with foam and sore with ocean spent
And his long fasting, did the maidens bring
Unto an aged priest, that lived apart
Some sixty paces from the temple-pale.

There did they leave him, passing loathfully,
And o'er their shoulders bending wistful eyes
Departed thence. But she he 'saviour' called
Lingered anigh, as held by right divine,
Not all exprest, but understood of both ;
And, while the priest on Roland did bestow,
Within his dwelling, care of garb and food,
Sat patient on a low bank at the door.
But so it fell that, when from friendly care
His needs grew lessened, till he needed nought,
Roland was fain to get him out, in haste
He oped a door—not it wherethrough he entered—
And, passing, stood in shadow of broad trees
Flickering aslant a road, through meadows set
Towards a palace. Then he turned and saw
The priest was with him; whom he questioned straight
Angered in heart, yet with full courtly words
—For that he gave him care of garb, and food—
Touching the maidens. Shortly spake the priest :
“The maidens whom thou saw'st are bound by vows
To yonder temple. She who came and stayed

Is not less bound. But yonder dwells the king
Who rules this land, to whom I bring thee now."

And so, while thrice the sun did rise and set,
And while were three fresh morns and three gray
eves

Sundered by three green golden afternoons,
He was entreated there most courteously.
Then, having never set his eyes on her
He was most fain to see, unto the king
He fareweill said, for now his mind was set
Upon his kingdom, and took ship and sailed
Eastward for home across the tossing seas.

So Muriel slept. And, in the dead of night,
Appeared a vision unto her, that said,
"Get thee at dawn along the eastern way,
Till barred by basements of the land above.
And, where thou seest, more large than all the rest,
A spur of rock jut out to meet thee, turn
Left of the path, beneath an arch, that yawns
Black with sea-mosses, tangle, and dark weeds.

There dwelleth Hintophel, the sea-witch ; she
Will help thee in thy present dole, being learned
In what will be on earth and here below !”

The vision spake, and 'parted ; and at dawn,
Telling it only unto her she loved
Of all her maidens best, and bidding her
To hide the journey till the day was dead,
Muriel set out along the eastern way.
And where she saw, more large than all the rest,
A spur of rock jut out to meet her, turned .
Left of the path, beneath an arch, that yawned
Black with sea-mosses, tangle, and dark weeds ;
And entering found the sea-witch Hintophel.

In fewest words dread tales are aye told best.
She entered, and her sweet voice clearly rung
Through the strange gloom, whenas she spake her
dole.

She came forth, and her little mouth was stained
With crimson, and no farewell words she spake !

Thus at most sore cost had she purchased hope,
Nor sore did count it then, poor trustful heart!
For in her ears the words of Hintophel
Still rang most gladsome; how that she might win
Love of a mortal; and, that won, a soul.
She still was beauteous though she might not speak;
Her eyes had power, and she should move on earth
Most graceful 'mid earth's fairest; she would win
The prince, fair Roland, whom her heart desired.
So did the wily serpent, flattery, coil
About her heart; and home and loved ones there
Were screened by the gold-coloured haze of words.
While meantime she, grim tenant of the cave,
Chuckling full hideously, in her bony hand
Held up the little severed tongue, her price:
And watched what way and shape the blood-gouts fell,
With eyes insatiate, chuckling yet again,
As on her hair she wiped the knife's red blade.

Now Muriel, the cave's outmost having won,
Made no long tarrying; but with eager heart,
Hopeful and therefore happy, forthwith rose

To the sea-surface : for the land, whose base
Housed Hintophel, was that desired land
Ruled by prince Roland.

And the day was spent,
And night was o'er the city, nigh whereto
She flashed into the moonlight.

Bare sea-walls.
The wan waves washed, walls crowned with roofs
and towers,
That, in the shadows' deepest, cleaving took
Shape of wide docks, wherein were crowded ships,
Weird in the blackness ; but the moonlight tipped
The tallest masts, made taller of the night ;
And over tower and roof stole on, and gleamed
Brighter athwart a palace.

' There,' did Muriel think,
' There dwelleth Roland.' Then she was afraid,
And paused, then nearer swam, then paused again :
And, lastly, taking heart, moved quietly

Among the great ships, where the shadows lay.
While oft the singing shipmen make her start,
Unwitting they; the bright watch-lamps were eyes
That stared and frightened her; the rustling waves
Did threaten to betray her; still she swam;
And, finding joyful landing, unperceived,
Passed up the sleeping city. Then she paid
Sad price whereon she did most lightly think
What time she made her barter. So she passed;
And, as she passed, her little feet did burn
Exceeding grievous as with bloodshedding;
And e'en the smoothest footway-flags did cut
Deep biting wounds, that none might see withal;
For no blood dyed her feet, and she did move
In such sweet graceful wise, you might not count
She had so much of anguish: but her heart
Hope lit with sunshine, so she bore it all
Full bravely, having Roland in her heart.
And while she was thus musing, loud she heard
The great night echo 'Roland!' flung to heaven
From thousand tongues, and noised abroad the place
With blare of trumpets, mingled with the glow

Of revel in the palace : and anigh
Her weary little wounded feet were drawn.
And, standing in the palace-garden, leapt
Her glad heart ; yet had she no other thoughts
Than that she loved him, and that she would win
(So told her Hintophel the sea-witch learned
In what shall be) his love ; for she did know
Nought of the strange ways of the upper world,
Nought of the right or wrong of this or that,
Where wrong is right, because some deem it right,
And good is bad, when some have called it bad,
All ignorant of the slanderous lips of men,
Passed up the garden, and her feet did burn
Exceeding grievous as with bloodshedding ;
Passed up full bravely, for her heart was light ;
And all the garden-ways were sweet with flowers,
Terrace on terrace, and the fountains plashed
I' their marble basins, and the winds blew cool.

Meanwhiles within the halls the revel rang
Unceasing ; and the silken curtains swayed,
And gave, through wide-flung windows, to the wind

Somewhat of the mad revel and its glare :
And they, in sweet requital, with kind hands,
Sent back into the revel and its glare
Somewhat of all the flower-garden's sweet smells.

Now Roland, being exceeding weary grown,
And sick to heart, of homage smoothly paid,
E'en from true tongues, escaped the press, and passed
Full gladly down dim corridors and stairs,
His mind bent on an ivory-pillared court
Made sweetly cool, and murmurous withal,
By plashings of a fountain midmost set.
The floor was freaked with many a fantasy
Of costly stones, inlaid in beaten gold,
Traced over curiously, and the silver spray,
Falling, made all the colours dimly gleam,
Like rainbow spanning some swift waterfall,
Or sea-spray rained on halcyon's plumage bright.
But on the threshold Roland (for he heard
Somewhat, that was nor fountain-plash nor wind)
Paused, listening. Then in haste he drew aside
The broidered curtain, and, had you o'erlooked

His shoulder, might you likewise this have seen.
The fountain-spray; through this the farther walls
Dim, richly carven, with the windows pierced;
Wherethrough, seen yet more dim, a maiden-form,
Lithe, robed in samite, seaward looked and leaned;
A space of sky, moonlitten, edged with vines;
The delicate outline of one peach-bloom cheek;
The pink shell-colour of one cradling hand;
All crowned with glory of fine hair's blown gold.

Such, though in weak hues and by rude hands
limned,
The picture was,—most fair to look upon.

Then Roland's voice came to her, where she sat.
And Muriel turning, ware before she saw
His face that it was Roland, heard him say,
"O maiden, for I deem thee hither come,
Escaping from the revel and its glare,
E'en as myself, I pray thee let me bide
Anear thee! Nay, if thou wilt have it so,

I do but crave to be in the same place,
Made happy by thy presence !”

Muriel moved,
And, drawing her white robe about her, sat,
Her gold hair shed upon the edging vines,
Full gladly in the window-corner, yielding space.
And Roland, sprinkled with the fountain-spray,
Crossing the bright freaked floor, sat near to her.
Then, when the moonlight fell upon her face,
His eyes were opened, and he looked at her,
No more seen dimly ; and his voice brake out,
Telling how he had yearned to see her face ;
Telling how that through her he was escaped
The bitter swallowing of the greedy sea.
And Muriel answered nothing, being dumb.
But thinking, “ He assuredly doth know,
I saved him, not that other, even I,”
And asking to her heart, “ Love, is it love
Or only gratitude that kisseth me ?”
And hoping, “ He will make me his, and I,

I shall be near him through my life," she grew
Happy, but answered nothing, being dumb.

At length, they sitting there, a wonder came
On Roland, why she answered nothing; erst
Deeming that she was silent for shy fears.
But now, whenas, he questioning in words
Couched in most delicate and courtly wise,
She answered nothing, then was he aware
Why her sweet eyes had such sweet speaking ways,
Why language in her touch—that she was dumb.
And, sitting there, he did not make her sad
By pity, flung in many words, outdrawn
In 'ahs!' from lengthened mouths, with eyes upturned,
Hands lifted, when the heart no pity feels;
But said, 'Could she not speak? why then her eyes,
Her dear blue eyes should talk with him: her lips,
Had they no language? what were kisses then?'
And in such loving sort did converse hold,
That her most perfect happiness was wellnigh made
A Lethe to the knowledge of her state.

So there they, happy, seaward looked, and leaned:
The fountain's cool behind them, and the din
And glare yet farther parted; and in front
The garden, flower-sweet, and its terraces;
And, beyond these, the city, and the sea,
Calm, dark in harbour, but without upbroken
In silvery trouble; and the moon was soft,
And winds blew cool, and Muriel's heart was glad.

Afterawhiles did Roland lead her thence
Into the revel, and with great joy watched
The lips that questioned, and the eyes that stared
Envious, admiring; thinking 'She is mine.'
Nor, as she floated in most graceful wise,
Amid the throng, most fairest of them all,
Wist he a whit of all the dole she had;
Of how her weary little feet did burn
Exceeding grievous as with bloodshedding.
Then, when the last spark of the feast was dead,
Her to his lady mother did he bring,
That, set amid the maidens of the court,
By reason of her beauty and her grace,

By reason of her meek and gentle ways,
She in his mother's eyes might favour win.
Who, when she knew her dearest life was owed
—Her Roland—unto Muriel, and not less
By reason of her beauty and her grace,
By reason of her meek and gentle ways,
Clave to her closely; loving her right well;
And said, "In time will Roland make her his;"
And lived, with this one hope before her eyes,
Fed by the wish; and Muriel's heart was glad.

But Roland's mind was blown with winds of doubt.
For, day by day, himseemed another face,
That was not Muriel's, did before him rise,
That, day by day, grew less belike to her.
Her hair was gold: but the gold hair that lay
About him when he woke to life, did seem
Now, in his mind, not all the same to shine;
Nor, in his mind, were those blue eyes the same.
Yet, when he called her 'saviour,' and had said
That but for her the sea had swallowed him,
She gave him no denial. Then he thought,

'But they were bound, those maidens, all by vows
Unto the temple. How hath she escaped
Those vows' firm bonds? She hath not broken them?"
So was his mind all blown with winds of doubt.
And, while he doubted, and his doubts did drive
Whate'er of love or gratitude he had
(He wist not which for doubting) from his mind,
Came overseas, with greetings from the king,
By whom he was entreated courteously,
What time he had been wave-washed to his land,
To Roland heralds, craving he would come
Unto the palace, where their king did make
High feast to princes of the neighbouring lands.
And Roland, saying "Now of a truth will I
Have certain knowledge touching all this doubt,"
Bade to prepare, and then took ship and sailed
To the king's land, across the tossing seas.

Four days, that did full long and weary seem
To Muriel, passed; and then he was returned;
Yet did not see her, for he ever moved,
Busied, about the palace, and the docks.

And Muriel heard the shipwrights' hammer-clang
Blown up the city, answering the quick beat
Of footsteps through the palace, and the ring
Of voices, and the stir of some great work.
Whom, questioning, the maidens' gossip tongues
Told, saying "The prince prepares," then looked and
smiled,

"The prince prepares for bridal"—looked at her ;
And wondered who the happy maiden was ;
And smiled, unenvying ; for they loved her well,
By reason of her beauty and her grace,
By reason of her meek and gentle ways.
And Muriel feared for shame, and kept apart,
Nor came on Roland ; and his mother's eyes,
That looked on her full kindly, as with words
Saying, "At last will Roland make her his,"
Did bring the shamefast blood into her face.
So, pondering on these things, she kept apart ;
And days went onward ; and her heart was glad.

Then came a day—the year was golden-ripe
Unto its fall—when bosomed in the cool

Of close-impleachèd trees did Muriel sit.
And round her was the scent of mellowing fruits
Shed from warm walls, and rising from the ground
The heavier fragrance of the fallen ripe.
And o'er her fell a softened light of leaves,
Green leaves, part gold, part edged-upon with gold,
Brown tinged with crimson, crimson streaked of gold.
And all the garden and its terraces
Were bathed in mist: the blazing palace-walls
Shook in the heat: far off the great sea steamed
Quivering, and towards the cool, where Muriel sat,
Moved Roland, at noon's hottest, through the mist.

And Muriel lifted up her eyes, and saw
Him coming, and he took her hands and said,
"How fares it with my little dumb child? Glad,
And is she glad to see my face once more?
Thou well know'st, sweet, how I of late have moved,
Busied, about the palace, and the docks:
Nay, thou hast heard the shipwrights' hammer-clang
And pulse of preparation throbbing quick.
But now I come to tell my golden-hair

Somewhat of joy that she must share with me.
They say,—my sage ones,—ay, have said so long,
But that I never heeded them till now,
That it were full time that I wedded one
To sit beside me on my dead sire's throne;
And now I heed them, for that now mine heart
Is thereto set; and I that one have found:
One who, I ween, doth love me!"

Roland paused,

And Muriel's eyes were blinded with glad tears
That Roland saw not, for her face was turned
Deep-dyed with crimson; and he spake again:
"Her, sought for long, through many winds of doubt,
Within short compass of those four days spent
In the king's land, whither I went erewhile,
Her have I found, the one who rescued me
What time the cold waves washed me to that land.
—Yet what, sweet, dost thou know of that strange
hap?"

And Muriel answered nothing, being dumb.
"Her will I wed: and all the stir that rings

About us, unto this my bridal is !”
And Muriel’s face was white, and no tears fell.
“ Whom, when I erst set eyes on thee, did I
Deem thee to be : for thou art like to her ;
Nor didst thou give denial anywise
Whenas I called thee ‘ saviour.’ But let be :
Thou wist not, little one, what meant my words.
I would not blame thee, be that far from me !
For I do love thee well, sweet sister mine,
And deem thou hast towards me such love as one
Hath towards a brother, loved, yet loved the least
Of all his brethren ; for the sake whereof,
I ask, well ware I do not ask in vain,
That thou wilt love her, whom I wed anon.
But whom I wed, of all my people none
Hath any knowledge ; for my purpose was
To tell thee erst, that I might take from thee
Sweet first-fruits of good wishes.”

And her eyes,
If ever eyes have power to speak, did say,

“ Well wish thee? Ay, thou know’st I wish thee
well.”

And then, ere Roland brake the quiet again,
She drew her hands away from his, and crushed
Her face within them, and from out the shade
Stept slow into the sunshine; but her heart
Drifted from sunshine into saddest shade.
And all the glow and brightness seemed to mock.
She longed to be in some waste place of land,
Sodden and plashed ’neath bitter autumn-rains,
Where she might grovel, clutching the dank earth,
And weep, and weep, and cool her burning heart;
Away from all the sunshine, and the flowers,
Away from those gay-gleaming palace-walls,
Away from all the joy that lived around,
That was not hers, not hers; and, as she passed,
Herseemed the fountains murmured “vain, in vain!”
And her lone heart gave back reply, “in vain!”

Meantime, left sitting there, on Roland came
A wonder, and the wonder checked his feet
From following; and within himself he mused :

“Shame of a truth! Shame and shy fears of blame,
Spite of my words, for thanks so ofttime given
To her, requiting deeds she never did.
Poor little golden-hair! She did mistake
My words, else sure denial had she made
With those sweet speaking eyes, whenas I said
That but for her the sea had swallowed me.”

Thereat he took a golden leaf in hand,
And looked at it, thinking of nought the whiles,
Till woke a little breeze, that blew the leaf—
And his thoughts woke, and followed where it blew—
Unto the spot, whereby he last did see
Muriel; wherewith his thoughts came back to her.
“It cannot be she loves me otherway
Than sisterly! for ever hath she been
But as a pretty child to me to love
By reason of her beauty and her grace,
By reason of her meek and gentle ways,
Drawn nigh to love for pity, but to love
With any love, but that of man to wife.
It is but shy shame born of our mistake!”

And, purposing in honest heart with words
Of sweet assurance all that shame to kill,
And thinking on his bridal, Roland rose,
And palacewards full lightly stept away.

Then passed a time, wherein from dawn to dark
The stir grew louder wearing to its goal.
And Muriel sat, and listened with calm face,
Nor gave her sorrow entrance where she sat
To sadden aught of joy the others had
By sighs and tearful eyes; nay, she did seem
Gay past her wont, albeit to her those sounds
Were e'en as though she heard her own grave dug.
And so it fell that, Roland seeing her
In such gay wise, his mind found ease again,
Nor longer did he seek to keep apart,
As doubting of her case: but ever set
His mind to show what trust he had to her
By converse touching on his bridal, words
That seemed to ask and bide her sanctioning.
And Muriel masked her face with happiness
Lest he should sorrow, knowing how she fared.

So days ran on ; and, having won consent
That Muriel would sail with them,—for there sailed
His mother and the maidens of the court,
To do the bride such honour, as was meet,
Wife of their prince,—Roland took ship and sailed
To the king's land, across the tossing seas.

For, thither gone, what time the king did make
High feast to princes of the neighbouring lands,
Her did he find, the maiden long desired,
Whose arms were round him, when he woke to life,
Washed to that shore whereon the garden was,
And temple, and the priest, and maidens fair.
Her then, the daughter of the king, and now
Her brief vows being performed, Roland forthwith
Asked of the king in marriage, and the king,
No wise less willing than the maiden, pledged
The maiden to him. And, all things being prepared
Unto his bridal, Roland sailed away.

BOOK III.

Now would I have you know the bridal o'er,
Accompanied of every festive rite,
Of revel, and of music, and of song,
Of welcomes, and farewells, and all things glad
In heart and lips, of honour shouted loud
From loyal tongues, and all that meetly decks
The bridal of the daughter of a king.
And, on the ship, wherein across the seas
Homeward his fair sweet bride doth Roland bring,
I pray you deem that you do with me stand.

As on that night when Muriel erst did see
The earth she yearned for, and his ship, and him
Laid in his silk-hung cabin, and did hear
The merry music sent into the night ;

So now the good ship did but echo make
Unto the revels on the late-left land.
The night was spent, lacking but one short hour
Unto the morning ; and the shipmen sang
On the white decks, and with their singing shook
The startled air ; and dim the moon was made
By blazing of the many-coloured lamps.
Below, in their hushed fragrant cabin, sat
His bride and Roland, talking lovingly.
And Muriel, no long time past from them, stood
In a small cabin nigh to theirs, and looked,
Her round arms leaning on the window-ledge,
Across the sea ; and presently she wept
For that so long she had her tears' flow checked.
And, as she wept, far off she saw the waves
Gleam in one space, as in the days of old,
And knew that some one from her world was there.
Then, through her tears, she saw the gleam more
nigh,
Seen but by her, quick floating towards the ship,
To be her sisters. All their golden hair,
One time so bright, was shorn from their sad brows

And in their eyes was sorrow's bitter rain.
And, drawing nigh, thus one of them 'gan speak :
"Thus met, long lost, sweet sister, long desired !
Thus, on this night most sad to thee of all,
Whereon thy thoughts have travelled by some hap
Unto thine old sea-palace ! for of a truth,
I ween, thou hast not all forgotten us.
Didst deem we should not sorrow ? that our hearts
Would bear unmoved, whenas we learnt thee gone,
Risking thine all on such small sorry chance,
So fatal proven ? Couldst thou but have seen
What dole thou didst bequeath us in that time,
Our mother's years foretaken by great woe,
Our father's heart crushed to a nerveless thing,
Thou wouldst have had some pity for our case."

And Muriel answered nothing, being dumb.
But faster fell her tears, as they would say,
"And do ye deem I, sisters, have no dole ?"
But, when her sister saw her tears, she grew
Sore vexed that she had spoken her so hard,
Saying, "Nay, nay, sweet sister, do not weep !

Our sorrows sure thou hast no need to know
To make thee sad ; thine own hath power enough !
Yet, yet no time for words of pity now.
The night wears on ; and what is here to do
Needs must be done, ere dawn's first hour doth break.
See here this knife ! its price our golden hair
To Hintophel the sea-witch—nay, no fears !
Thanks shalt thou give us afterward—this take,
And pass into the cabin, where they sleep,
His bride and Roland. She must die to-night.
Thou dost not love her, thou ? Hear too the words
Of Hintophel, that she did speak to us :
' In the same night that Roland takes a bride,
Let Muriel's hope immortal soul to win
Die from her heart ! Her stake is staked, and lost !
Yet more, she hath nor claim, nor part in right
Given to the dwellers in the ancient sea,
Life for three hundred years. For, in that night,
Except the bride, ere dawn's first hour doth break,
Shall surely die, by Muriel's own hand slain,
Muriel shall melt to foam of the old sea,
Untasting of the long sea-maiden's life ;

Untasting of the joys of wedlock, joined
Unto some noble sea-king, as is meet !'
So spake she ; and to her thou wilt give heed,
Nor wilt thou open our old wounds anew,
Nigh healed by hope of thee to us restored.
See, yonder through the waters dimly gleam
Our palace-roofs ! And there our mother sits,
Her white hair shed about her withered face,
Wet with her tears, and prays for thy return !"

And Muriel, gazing thither, wellnigh deemed
She saw her ; and her heart was sorely moved.
Then, drawing soft the cabin-curtain, saw
Where Roland slept, his arms locked round his bride,
Her head upon his bosom ; and her lips
Grew bloodless, and her eyes were parched of tears,
And, stretching forth her hand, she took the knife,
And passed into the cabin ; while on deck
The shipmen sang, and homewards flew the ship ;
And the hour crept on, and o'er the carven couch,
Whereon they lay unconscious, Muriel stood.

Half the white breast, that nestled close to his,
Was bare. The little blue veins shone and showed,
Or seemed to show, to Muriel's eyes a path
For the knife-point. One arm of Roland's lay
Under her neck, hid in a shower of gold,
And joined his other, that did sweetly cross
Her lissome body. Her full lips shone red
Against his throat; and, e'en as Muriel leant,
Parted and whispered "Roland," fearing nought.
Then Muriel laid the knife upon the breast
That heaved, soft-slumbering, 'gainst the breast she
loved,
And, in the bright steel mirror, saw the flesh
Gleam pink and sweet: and then on him she gazed,
And leant, and kissed him; while her mind did run
Back to the pleasant meadows of the past,
And saw the golden days for ever slain,
And thought of all his well-loved lips had said,
And thought of her, who won what she had lost,
Lost! (and her fingers clutched the knife in haste.)
And then of Roland, whom her arms had saved;
Of Roland, who had loved her, ere his mind

Grew doubtful,—loved her, she had deemed, as well
As her, that other ; Roland, whom she loved,
Loved, but loved vainly ; and she seized the knife,
And, with the full force of her little arms,
Far, through a window, flung it to the waves.

Then, as the ship-bells 'gan to ring the hour,
Thrice kissing Roland on his lips and eyes,
Passed to a still spot of the ship, and leapt
Down to the sea ; while gay the shipmen sang
On the bright decks their greetings to the dawn,
With voice unwitting ; and yonder, where she leapt,
Nought might you see, save that in one small space
The foam shone somewhat whiter, flushed with dawn.

And on the good ship flew across the seas !
And Muriel's sisters watched, until the sails
Gleamed but as gleaming of a sea-bird's wings
Faint in the distance ; and then homeward sank,
Weeping, adown the tremulous blue waves.
But, home being reached, when Roland did not see
Among the other maidens Muriel's face ;

And no one any certain knowledge had
Touching her hap ; and minding in what wise
Her coming was and now her going ; he deemed
He had seen a spirit : nathless for the love
Of all the sweet time past with her, now gone,
Albeit a spirit, raised a costly tomb,
And mourned, as one who for a sister mourns,
Saying, “ Alas, my sister ! ” while far off,
From dawn to dusk, from glimmering dusk to dawn,
The foam, that once was Muriel, ever rocked
Restless, unknowing he did mourn for her.

So, in what time the old sea's foam you hear
In sunshine lisp with happy voice, or moan
Sad under bitter rains, I pray you then
On Muriel think, and all the dole she had.

THE ARMOURER.

It is the sturdy Armourer,
Before his forge he stands,
And swings his heavy hammer
With large and brawny hands ;
And the flashing sparks fly here and there
From the anvil glowing bright,
While the mellow voice of the Armourer
Rings forth into the night—
Up through the smoky rafters
It echoes loud and clear,
While he shapes the battered helmet
And mends the broken spear :
And as his iron hammer
Goes swinging to and fro,

He sings of valiant heroes,
And wars waged long ago.
And, when his work is over,
And the evening meal is spread,
When the good-wife plies her distaff,
And deftly weaves the thread,
When, abroad, the howling tempest
Is raging wild and drear,
And the pattering of the rain-drops
Strikes mournful on the ear ;
In the cosy chimney corner
He sits before the blaze,
And tells his listening little-ones
The tale of other days !

THE GARDENER.

BEHIND a tall gray headland,
Fresh washed by western seas,
The terraced slopes of a garden
Stretched to the summer breeze.
Thither, when hazy shadows
Dropt on the slumbrous land,
From far there came a Gardener—
A flow'ret in his hand.
And placing it nigh to another
Amid the twinkling dew,
Days, months, and years he nourished it,
Until it stronger grew ;
Until soon he saw the other
Like a watchful guardian stand ;

Then he kissed the flowers, and departed
Into a distant land.

And years of golden sunshine,
Mingled at times with rain,
Fell on them, till the Gardener

One evening came again,—
Long after Toil had bidden
Her myriad voices cease,
And city, plain, and hamlet
Lay wrapt in perfect peace.—

Peace in the noisy city,
Peace on the restless wave,
Peace in the busy village,
Peace on the soft green grave !

* * * *

Next morn, when the distant headland
Beneath the sunlight shone,
I went to the spot, where I left them,
But the guardian-flower was gone !

The other was drooping sadly,
Dulled were the petals blue,
And its tiny eyelids moistened
With glistening tears of dew.
And years renewed their stories
Of joys, and griefs, and care,—
Hopes and dark fears commingling—
But the flower still lingered there !
Withering ! yet still I loved it,
Like a dear familiar friend ;
For it seemed to be teaching a lesson
Of “ waiting for the end.”
Waiting, till all is over,
The sadness, tears, and pain,
Hoping perchance the Gardener
One day would come again.
And I ween that I, too, should be happy,
Could I hope that, when all is o’er,
The Gardener would take me also
Where he took the flower before !

THE HEARTS OF SAXONY.

THE thin blue mists of evening hung soft on wood
and lea ;

Calm lay the flowery land about, calm as a summer
sea ;

And rich the western splendour fell, in many a rose-
red line,

Flushing the crown of Saxony—the lordly Koenig-
stein !

And all the linden grove, that bloomed round Dres-
den, was aglow,

And bright were spire and dome above, bright was
the Elbe below.

Upon the bridge's parapet, that spanned the widening
flood,

Clad in the Prussian uniform, three soldiers chatting
stood :

Resting from all the heat of day, they watched the
waters flow,

And saw their Prussian uniforms reflected clear below.

Then outspake he, whose furrowed brow showed
deepest Time's white snow :

“Now curst be the scheming tyrant, who wrought
our country woe ;

Who, in his thirst for self-renown, feigned 'twas for
Prussia's weal

That our sunny land of Saxony should bend to
foreign steel ;

And crushed the valiant ones who dared to stem his
haughty way :

Ah me ! would Heaven that I had died before I
saw the day—

Before the morning burst to view this vineyard-clad
champaign ?

These pine-crowned heights, and wooded knolls,
beneath a victor's chain.

Ah well ! but it is useless now to bluster or to storm ;

But curst be the hand that made us wear this Prussian uniform ! ”

Then spake the youngest of the three, with bold and fearless air,

While the sunshine lit his ruddy cheeks and his locks of flaxen hair :

“ ’Tis true that they have crushed us low to bend to their command,

And spurned the good old monarch, who ruled our sunny land ;

But our hearts they cannot master, our feelings still are free,

And every pulse shall cease to beat, or beat for Saxony.

Then cheer ye, gallant comrades, let these words your bosoms fill :

‘ Though Prussian be our uniform, our hearts are Saxon still ! ’ ”

THE LIME WALK.

BENEATH the shadowy lime walk
I lay amid the leaves,
And dreamt of golden visions
In bygone summer eves ;
And I saw up the fragrant vista
A bright form slowly pass,
Up from the silver lakelet,
Up through the long, green grass.
Radiant its face, and happy,
Glowing the golden hair,
And white wings on its shoulders,
And raiment wondrous fair ;
But, ere it reached the archway,
Slumbrous with rich perfume,

Another form came stealing
From the dewy laurel-gloom ;
Its pale face, half averted,
Hung drooping on its breast,
Folded its wings, and its fingers
To wet cheeks tightly prest ;
As if to hide its sorrow,
And tears that fell like rain—
Tears shed in sweet compassion
For weary souls in pain.

* * * *

But soon the visions faded,
And I well know what they mean :
One told "what is" and "will be,"
And one "what might have been."

THE WINDFLOWER.

(ANEMONE.)

THE storm-god left his iron home
Hewn in the earth's rough base,
Down 'neath the ocean-deeps, and rose
With anger on his face.
And onward over land he strode,
And heaving miles of sea,
Until he reached a gloomy wood,
And a stern command howled he :
" Blow up, ye coward winds, that lie
In arms of pleasant sleep,
And let these weeping mortals know
What 'tis to really weep !
Blow loud ! blow strong, athwart the world,
Nor heed their shivering forms ;

Blow loud ! and let their tatters feel
The fury of your storms !”

* * * *

And straight obediently went they,
On mournful mission bound,
O'er fields and forests, where they shed
Bright teardrops to the ground :
Bright tears of heartfelt true regret,
That such their task should be ;
And, where they touched the greensward, sprang
The pale anemone.

THE WHITE WOOD-VIOLET.

I HEARD the wind blow loudly,
At the middle of the night ;
For awake I had long been lying,
Pondering what to write.

But words refused their mission,
And language seemed to flee ;
So I went to the woods, when the morning
Burst windy and bright from the sea,—

Up to the open encampment,
Along the short, green grass,
And saw from afar to their roadsteads
The shining vessels pass.

And I found a white wood-violet
Asleep, 'neath the waving trees,
Lulled by the breath of the primrose,
And the blue-veined anemones.

The dew from the slender branches
On the blossomed carpet fell,
And I plucked the white wood-violet,
And gazed in its tiny bell.

It told of the death of Winter,
And all his days of gloom ;
Of Springtide's dewy blossoms,
Bright leaves, and early bloom.

It spoke of the Past and the Present,
That outwardly seemed so fair ;
But I fancied the thought of the Future
Clouded its face with care.

Perchance it saw dark visions
Of weary months of pain ;

Or was it only dreading
Some coming shower of rain ?

I know not; but still I plucked it,
And, when my walk was done,
I wove my idle fancies
And the violet into one.

So take them, and what of sweetness
You find in my humble lay,
It is not mine, but the violet's
I plucked in the woods to-day.

IN THE CHURCHYARD.

AGAINST the old gray cross I leant,
 And heard the sunlit foliage wave :
 Above me God's blue sky was bent,
 Around me many a nameless grave.

And long on some the grass had grown,
 Unkept as in a lonely land ;
 Garlands of flowers on some were strown
 By tearful Memory's loving hand.

And here I thought a weary form
 Beneath the grass at length may lie,
 Freed from the bitter piercing storm
 That darkened his life's history.

And here at rest a mother's limbs,
Her babe cold-slumbering on her breast :
And o'er the mountains' shadowy rims
Soft echo breathed reply, " At rest."

* * * *

Thus as I mused, in quiet laid,
Up came, like noise of rising sea,
The school-freed children through the shade,
And, passing, snapt my reverie.

GONE HOME ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

"HOME," did you say, my darling? We haven't
got where to go!

Only the dreary pavement, only the freezing snow,
Only the hard cold stones against our weary feet,
Only the flaring lamplight, only the open street!

"Cold," did you say, my darling? I know the
cloak is thin,

But I haven't got anything better, or warmer to
wrap you in!

Yet hug it closer round you, though it is so thin and
old,

And we'll go and sit on this doorstep, out of the
bitter cold!

78 GONE HOME ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

We can hear the loud bells ringing: I love to hear
 them so,
They remind me of one past New Year's Eve, only
 a year ago ;
Only twelve short, short months, but they seem like
 as many years ;
Then my eyes shone brightly, but now—they are
 dull with tears.

A New Year's Eve, my darling,—the last that I was
 to see
With my husband, round the fireside, and you upon
 my knee ;
And, as the bells were ringing—just as it may be
 to-night—
He talked of the past and present, and all looked
 cheerful and bright.

He talked of a soft Spring morning, when first he
 saw my face :—
He was an unknown painter, and had come to stay
 in the place ;

And he used to take his painting out in the sunny
land—

It was there that first I met him, it was there that
he asked my hand.

And oft at eve in the sunlight by the fern-clad stile
we stood,

That leads from the field of clover into the hazel
wood ;

While the thousand voices of labour came up from
the village below,

And through the leaves beside us we heard the river
flow.

And fondly he talked of our marriage, and anon of
a happy morn,

All in the flowery summer, when, darling, you were
born ;

Until soon the candle flickered, and the falling ashes
grew dim—

Then we slept, and all through the quiet I lay and
dreamt of him.

80 GONE HOME ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

Gladly I woke on the morrow, the first day of the
year ;

Gladly I heard from the village the chimes go loud
and clear ;

Gladly I woke, and leant over to kiss your sunny
hair,

And I turned to kiss your father—I turned—but he
was not there.

Gone! after all his fondness, on the Old Year's
dying day !

Gone, after all his kind words! But a letter
remained to say

That he long had feared his parents wouldn't know
him for their own,

If they heard of his humble marriage—so he left me
all alone !

And the parish turned us out: it wasn't our house,
they said:

O God! but is it wicked to wish that I were
dead?

They came and turned us out, and we hadn't got
where to go,—

Only the dreary common, only the driving snow.

And all looked bleak and friendless, and I clasped
you, darling, tight—

Clasped you tight to my bosom, and away in the
dark rough night,

Away from the sleeping village, along the desolate
road,

We walked, until soon before us the lights in London
glowed.

But the brightness seemed to mock us, and the
glare to laugh us down,

As, weary and faint with our journey, we entered
the noisy town;

And the heartless passers spurned us—they never
had known a care—

O God! it is hard, my darling—O God! it is hard
to bear!

82 GONE HOME ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

And once on an Autumn evening, as I was wan-
dering by,
I stopped and looked in at a window, I looked—but
I know not why;
And by the cheerful fireside I saw a well-known
face,
And another, a lovely maiden, was sitting there in
my place.

And my spirit yearned towards her, but could I
say a word?
So I bitterly wept at the window—it was only the
rain they heard:
My spirit yearned towards her, to tell her to have
good care:
For I said in my anger, "The painter has another
victim there!"

But I checked the words of anger; I wouldn't
darken their love:
If *he* doesn't care about me, there's One who does
above!

Yet still I can see that window, and the well-known
features there—

O God! it is hard, my darling—O God! it is hard
to bear!

It was only yesterday evening that they passed us
in the street;

But he turned his face to the darkness, not to see
who lay at his feet;

Nor saw the sweet look of compassion that crossed
his wife's fair face—

Little, I trow, she fancied she held *my* rightful
place.

Listen! The bells are telling the year is dying
slow:

It was just like this that I heard them, only a year
ago!

They sound like the bells of our village, rolling up
from below the hill—

Why don't you answer, darling? why do you lie so
still?

84 GONE HOME ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

Why are the blue eyes closed? Why are the limbs
so cold?

And yet on the pale lip lingers the sunny smile of
old—

[But while the bells were ringing out through the
frosty air,

An angel had taken my darling to Heaven, to be
happy there !]

“Home,” did you say, my darling? Yes, *you’ve*
found a home of rest,

Although your frail little body hangs lifeless on my
breast!

“Home,” did I say, my darling? *I* haven’t got
where to go,—

Only the hard hard pavement—only the cold cold
snow!

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

TOWARDS the mid watches of the night
I saw an old man shivering go,
Hugging his threadbare mantle tight,
Over the broad wild waste of snow.

A bright green wreath across his brow,
The marks of pain and age to hide;
Within his hands a withered bough,
A flickering lanthorn at his side.

And ever, on the gleaming snow,
From his pale forehead trickled fast
Great drops of blood, as tottering slow
Towards a far-distant church he passed.

Leaving a happy home behind,
Where warm fires glowed, and gay smiles shone,
He heard, upon the friendless wind,
Loud bells that told him to be gone.

Loud bells that through the frosty air
Chimed their wild music to the sky,
Came to him, as he shivered there,
Seeming to say 'twas time to die.

And fainter grew the weary track
His feet were making through the snow ;
He saw not some one at his back
Who chuckled, glad to see him go.

* * * *

Anon he gained the church, and lay
Upon a cold grave for his bed ;
And, as the bells rang in the day,
His lamp burnt dim—his soul had fled !

Next morning, with the early light,
 A fresh green holly-wreath I found;
The drops of blood were berries bright;
 A child was sleeping on the mound!

1867.

LE ROI EST MORT : VIVE LE ROI !

RING the muffled bells and slow,

(Sad and slow,)

Sway the dull sounds to and fro,

(To and fro,)

And, through the kirkyard, still and low,

Night and cowlèd darkness go,

And sleep, and rest from toil and woe ;

Miserere Domine !

One, whose eyes, few months gone by,

Shone, amid the brightest, bright,

Lies a dying in the night,

Lies a dying loneliness.

Dying, not as others die,
With watchers' tears, and sob and sigh,
But glee, and grief, and revelry,
And sorrow, linked confusedly.

Miserere Domine !

The year lies dying, dying, dying.
One by one the minutes, flying,
 Tell the journeying hour is near,
When, to his long home, outsets,
 Lone and feeble, the Old Year,
With his tale of vain regrets,
 With his tale of hope and fear.
A long farewell to thee, Old Year !
 Farewell ! farewell !
—All is over ! death is here !
 Miserere Domine !

* * * *

Clash the merry bells and loud,
 (*Gay and loud,*)

90 LE ROI EST MORT : VIVE LE ROI !

Echo up the sweeping cloud,

(Long and loud,)

Clash ! and let the sounds be driven

Gaily 'gainst the brightening heaven :

“To us another year is given !

Gloria tibi, Domine !”

1869.

A BRIDAL-SONG.

TO H. H.

GENTLE lady, ope thy lattice,
Stretch to me thy soft white hand;
I am weary of my journey
Over leagues of sea and land:
Weary of the world's confusion,
And I long to be at rest;
Take me, lady, ere I perish,
Lay me warm within thy breast.
Fear me not! I will not harm thee;
Sweeter task was given to me,
Bearing on thy marriage-morning
Wishes from beyond the sea—
Wishes, that the day, just breaking,
Be the earnest of a life

Lit with golden beams, to banish
Dark misgivings of the strife ;—
Wishes, that the thorns which gather
Round the path where Sorrow goes,
Changing 'neath thy feet, may blossom
Each and every one a rose ;
Till the love, which binds thee closely
To the heart that beats for thee,
Merge ye both into the bosom
Of the shadowy, great " To be."

* * * *

Earnest wishes ! but the pencil
Trembled in the poet's hand,
All in vain he sought for sweetness
Through the bowers of fairyland :
All in vain, at morn, he listened
To the southern breezes' cry ;
All in vain, at night, he waited
For some music from on high ;

Till he found, within a forest,
On a bed of shining green,
Two bright rose-leaves, dropt to whisper
To a bud that slept atween.
Falteringly he told his story
To the flow'ret, where it lay;
Flowers have hearts, and so the rosebud
Taught the poet what to say.
Eagerly his fingers plucked it,
Closely to his bosom prest,
And it cheered his drooping fancies—
Lady, you may know the rest!
Open, then, thy welcome lattice,
Stretch thy soft white hands to me;
I am weary of my journey
Over leagues of land and sea:
And when soon my failing pinions
Flutter gladly to thy hand,
Only dream thou hold'st a rosebud,
Plucked within a distant land.

A MARRIAGE-LAY.

TO A. B. F.

*Good wishes are like gales that swell
Our canvas o'er the world's broad sea,
A stranger though the wisher be,
And unknown fingers wake the shell.*

*So haply unrebuked may lie,
On this thy golden marriage-morn,
This tiny flower before thee, born
In pleasant lawns of Poesie.*

*And shouldst thou, lowly as it is,
Raise it and in thy soft hand hold,
Its happy petals would unfold,
And breathe a message like to this:*

Wake, gentle maiden, wake and view
The dawn roll up the shore of day :
The glad sun shineth in the blue,
The glad winds sing thy marriage-lay.

Far voices in sweet uplands heard
With leaf of corn all golden-gay,
Rustle of leaf, and note of bird,
Join song to sound thy marriage-lay.

While, borne from green cool leafy dells,
Come changes rung by every flower;
Faint echo to the happy bells
That greet thee from the gray church-tower.

Loud happy bells, that ring to thee
The dawn of sunlight-laden hours,
Broad brightness as of summer sea,
Soft sweetness as of summer bowers.

Far, far from thee be sorrow-storms
That beat upon the shivering world,

The clouds that burst on other forms,
The gloomy folds round others curled.

But joy and pleasant peace be thine,
And his on whom thou leanest now !
And Love's strong power, 'mid rain and shine,
To guide towards yonder mountain's brow—

Yon rocky height, whose basements meet
And bound the earthly pathway given ;
Bright be that pathway till your feet
Strike firm upon the hills of Heaven !

A MARRIAGE-LAY.

TO A. M. S.

AWAY! the bright late morning wears
Towards the baby-autumn noon ;
Away! away! lend not thine ears
To yonder gray sea's quiet tune.
Unheeded, 'neath thy pine-clad hill,
Still let it woo thee, saying " Stay ;"
Unheeded let the song-birds fill
Thy garden-ways with music gay ;
Unheeded leave each flower and tree,
About thy loved home-spaces born ;
Another now hath need of thee !
The summons hast thou heard since morn.
" *New life we ring to thee !*
" *Glad days we sing to thee !*"

Clash the bells gleefully,
Bells of thy marriage-morn !

Another now hath need of thee,
Who, in the village church, awaits
Thy coming footsteps wishfully ;
Pass on, pass through the wide-flung gates,
And up the leafy lime-tree aisles,
Amid the flowers before thee flung,
Amid the sunshine, and the smiles,
And welcomes, sent from many a tongue ;
And lift thine eyes, and lift thine ears,
To yonder ancient tower and worn,
That high its belfry-windows rears,
Whose summons hast thou heard since morn.

“ New life we ring to thee !

Glad days we sing to thee ! ”

Clash the bells gleefully,
Bells of thy marriage-morn !

Pass, maiden, at thy father's side,
Into the dim church from the glare !

Pass out! pass out, a new-made bride!

While loud the organ shakes the air.

And, while thy fair bridemaids move

Bright glancing down amid the limes,

And, while thou lean'st on him, whose love

Shall fold thee in the coming times,

In sweet requital for the life

And well-loved home, whence thou art torn,

Thou'lt hear the bells that hail thee "wife"

And thy new life, towards thee borne.

"New life we ring to thee!"

Glad days we sing to thee!"

Clash the bells gleefully,

Bells of thy marriage-morn!

Awhiles: and then with hearty speech,

And glee, the bridal-feast encrowned;

Good wishes, vying each with each;

The wishing-cup flashed gaily round;

But chiefest, and than all more sweet,

The wish, that life be here so past,

Through storm and shine, that all may meet

At the great marriage-feast at last.

So may'st thou own in after years,

(Thy mind on wings of memory borne

To all the sounds that fill thine ears

On this, thy golden marriage-morn,)

" New life we ring to thee,

Glad days we sing to thee !"

Clashed the bells truthfully,

Bells of thy marriage-morn !

ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

We left behind rich lights that cast
A mingled glow about the room ;
We left the farewell-words, and past
With lingering footsteps into gloom ;
And "*Dying*," sang in mournful swells,
"*The Year is dying*," rang the bells,
On New Year's eve.

The farewell-words with wishes blent,
Good wishes for the coming year,
That rang, as down the hill we went
Into the village, on our ear ;
And "*Dying*," sang in mournful swells,
"*The Year is dying*," rang the bells,
On New Year's eve.

A merry party, two by two,
Homeward the shining road we prest,
And paused to hear the bells, and view
The stars asleep on heaven's wide breast.
And "*Dying*," sang in mournful swells,
"*The Year is dying*," rang the bells,
On New Year's eve.

Not long: and borne by hands unheard,
The dead Year, in his shadowy pall,
Swept heavenwards, and with whispered word
We parted 'neath the garden-wall.
And "*Welcome*," sang in joyful swells,
O Year, we hail thee!" rang the bells,
On New Year's morn.

TO AN OLD FRIEND.

CRADLED in woods a garden lies,
A happy garden that I know ;
Beneath, unceasing fall and rise
The western waves with murmurs low.

And sunshine on its beds of bloom,
Its ferny banks, its every tree,
And pleasant floods of deep perfume,
And pleasant voices from the sea.

There, where, the mossy lawn aslant,
An oak its flickering shadow made,
With trembling hands I came to plant
A bud, fresh plucked from yonder glade ;

That, sheltered from the driving rain,
And guarded from the piercing blast,
I haply, when I came again,
Might find it blossomed to a flower at last.

And thus beneath thy sheltering shade,
Deeming that thou wilt guard it long,
And keep it, though it droop and fade,
I come to plant my little song;

That they, whom in each feeble tone
I've tried to sing, some love may share,
May in thine arm a shelter own,
And haply find protection there.

GOLDEN WISHES.

TO I. W. H.

FALTERING was the hand that wrote them,
Poor and weak the words I've sent ;
Yet I send them, for, though failing,
You will take them as they're meant.

Meant to tell the golden wishes
Of an earnest heart for thee :
Golden wishes for thy Future,
For the strife of years to be.

Golden wishes for thy Present :
Think not of past years of pain ;
Buried joys and buried sorrows
Will alike ne'er come again.

Golden wishes—not for beauty,
Not for wealth, or empty fame :
Bright enough the crown thou wearest
Of thine own unsullied name.

Golden wishes that thy Present
May a sunny radiance shed,
And, amid life's weary toiling,
Drop its roses on thy head.

It may be that showers of sorrow
Gathering cloud the brightening plain ;
Yet the roses look the loveliest
After they have felt the rain.

It may be thy thoughts will travel
Back to those thy bosom loved,
It may be that thou wilt sorrow
Over those who faithless proved.

Yet regret not ! if their friendship
Had for thee so soon an end,

Of thy love they ne'er were worthy,
Never should be callèd 'friend.'

Years may come of joy and sunshine,
Years may come of storms and woe :
One thing is, which ne'er returneth,
The mysterious Long-Ago !

Hopes and fears may come ; but ever
Play thy woman's loving part,
Glad and joyous with the joyous,
Sorrowing with the sad at heart.

Take them then, these golden wishes
Breathed for this thy natal day,
Take them then, and when you read them,
Think for once on those away.

And if haply they should furnish
One small link within the chain
Of the wishes breathed by others,
Then—they were not breathed in vain.

GOLDEN WORDS.

TO I. W. H.

LAST night I heard the wind arise,
Where the cold river runneth low ;
I heard it moan in fitful sighs,
I heard it wail adown the skies,
The long reeds whispered soft replies :
"A year ago."

This morn I saw red streaks of light,
Where the gay river runneth low ;
I saw wide wood and meadow bright,
And birds sweep earthward into sight,
To whisper, pausing in their flight :
"A year ago."

Ever sweet and sad the burthen,
Though the restless world may change,
Comes at will the same old message,
Ever sweet, as sad and strange :
Telling dreams of idle weaving,
Storm, and shadow, sun, and woe ;
Raising, from the dark, vibrations
To a harp long hushed and low :—
Echoing back the few faint numbers
That I sang a year ago !
So I seized the harp, and trembling
Swept my hand across the string,
While a shadow bending o'er me
Cheered, and taught me what to sing.

Golden words they were, and worthy
Nobler harps of nobler tone ;
Golden words of comfort, speaking
All the music of thine own.

Golden words of truth and comfort,
Breathing through the mystic years,

Sunshine after days of darkness,
Morning after night of tears !

Storm-clouds ranged athwart the heavens,
Making gloomy all the view,
But—behind—the silver lining,
And God's endless meads of blue !

Fainting pilgrims climbing, footsore,
Up the steep hill's stony side,
But—above—the wished-for hostel
Flinging doors of welcome wide !

Weary travellers belated
Wandering deep in darksome wood,
But—beyond—unhid the moonlight
Gleams to cheer their solitude !

Heath and woodland, fern and flow'ret
Dying in the cold and rain,
But—stern Winter gone—the Springtime
Gives them happy life again !

* * * *

Golden words to light the pathway,
Newly entered on this day,
With the hopes and wishes for thee,
And the prayers of those away.

Small their worth, and feebly spoken,
Faltering numbers though they be,
Haply they will make *one* ripple
In thy Life's unfathomed sea :

One small wave to *help* to bear thee
Safe, through shadows, on its breast
To the shore of that far country,
Where the end of all is rest.

IN MEMORIAM

BEATRICE MONCK.

I WOULD not tread that still, sad room,
Where wakes and sleeps your holy woe;
I might not hope to check the flow
Of tears, or banish aught of gloom.

But, trembling stranger as it is,
My song shall stand without the door,
No entrance ask ; ask nothing more
Save kind forgiveness unto this :

What though the flower you held so dear,
Set by the Gardener of fair earth,
Hath marred the promise of its birth,
And gone, and left the garden drear,—

O deem not but that He, whose hand
Did set and tend it here awhile—
Knowing heaven might not always smile,
And storms must rise athwart the land—

Came for the flower, your darling ; came,
And took her to His sheltering breast,
Secure from tempest, toil, unrest,
From strife, and strugglings after fame.

O mother, sorrowing for thy care,
And love, and anguish, vainly paid !
O father, whose strong hands have played
Amid thy darling's silken hair !

God help and teach you how to wait
For His good time, until He come
And call you to His own sweet home,
To meet her, in the golden gate ;

A GLIMPSE OF SUNLIGHT.

ESCAPED the din and bustle of the town,
Edwin, a painter, in the rosy prime
That verges upon manhood, gladly went
To study nature in the flowery fields,
Which, severed by the lily-burdened flow
Of languid Avon, faded far away
In breezy uplands, browsed by snow-white flocks.
Close where the warm brown shadows of a bridge
Darkened the waters, rose a leafy wood,
Where the enchanted wanderer would hang,
And gaze far down the narrowing forest-aisle,
Till his rapt vision caught the sliding barge,
Or fairy shallop skimming snowy-sailed.
There Edwin set his easel—to his right
The stream ; to left the upward sloping glen—

And plied his painting; till the mid-day sun
Stood overhead, and pierced the wavy wood.
The while his slender-pointed pencil traced
The leafy beauties of the sylvan scene,
Pressing the pale wood-violets, softly stole
A blue-eyed maiden, veiled in golden hair ;
And, nigh a mossy fern-enfolded stile,
Stood lost in thought, and breathed a simple song,
Nor knew who looked at her ; but when his words—
“ I pray thee, lady, go not ! Let thy form
Grace my poor canvas : it is all I ask ! ”
Came up along the blossom-scented glen,
Half-veiled, and half-abashed, the maiden turned,
But yielded, for she liked his open face,
And there long lingered, dropping words at times
That brought him nearer her to make reply,
Till on his canvas, traced by trembling hands,
Her form stood imaged ; and when promises,
Drawn from the half-reluctant girl to come
That he might bring his picture to an end,
Were given, they parted ; and the evening fell,
And all the wood in shadowy mantle lay.

Bright rose the morning on the dewy land,
And with it Amy—such the maiden's name—
And came on Edwin sitting in the wood
Before his easel, waiting her approach.
A few shy words from Amy, and her feet
Pressed the soft greensward till she gained the stile;
Then Edwin fell to painting, but his brush
Moved not so quickly that he should not rise,
And, putting forth some idly-framed excuse,
Approach her—now a fold that looked amiss,
Or rose, to tone the colour of her robe.
Thus was his work neglected, and the time,
Past in sweet converse, yielded place to love.
And, sitting nigh the willow-haunted marge,
They viewed the silver swans go flitting down,
Or timid fawn trip from the glen to drink;
Yet, without heeding aught, for love had grown
Fresh, warm, and blooming in their youthful breasts,
And close enshrined them from the outer world.
And Edwin listened to the silvery voice
That prattled of her father and her home—
The little thatch-clad cottage on the hill—

And fain would linger all the vernal day.
But Amy brought to mind her father's word,
And led him to the cottage, where the three,
Together chatting, drew the hours along
With tales of peril, wrecks, and fierce blockade.
Then Edwin left them, and the evening fell,
And all the land in filmy shadows lay.

Thus he, albeit a stranger in the place,
Found friends right welcome, for the old man's heart
Warmed daily towards him, and each morn that burst
Saw the young painter at the cottage-door,
By the sea-captain heartily received,
Nor less by Amy : and the time slipped on.

One cool Spring-evening, ere the sun was down,
Edwin and Amy left the breezy hill,
And, talking sadly of the coming morn,
When he must seek again the noise of town,
Wound down through feathery hollows till they gained
A flowery wood-path to the fern-clad stile,
Where, on that past Spring-morning, they had met.

And there, with trees behind them, and before,
The river and its barges dimly seen,
The whispered "Amy, do you love me?" drew
The silvery numbers of a low response
From trembling lips that made him truly glad.
And thus, united in that heaven-born tie
That binds mankind—the marriage of the soul—
They loitered, happy in each other's love,
As though no sorrow dimmed this changeful world,
As though it all were sunshine bright, and clear,
And gay, as in the golden days of love!
But when they parted—for the sun had fallen—
And Amy, touching on the picture, begged
That he would finish it; his frank reply—
"Not till I cease to love you, Amy dear,
Which will be never!"—set her heart at rest.
And then she heard him bidding her farewell,
Felt the soft pressure of a loving arm
Folded around her, and, with tear-dewed eyes,
Saw him wind down the flowery forest-path,
Till the thick foliage hid him from her view.

Sad was that evening in the cottage-home !
Silent the old man's babble, for he grieved
At Edwin's absence, and would often rise
And wander to the breezy meadow-ridge
To catch the painter climbing from the wood ;
Yet, disappointed just so oft, return
To meet but Amy's broken voice, and eyes
Flooding with pearly tears their liquid blue.
Anon she told her father Edwin's word—
His whispered " Amy, do you love me ?" couched
In different terms, nor hid her own reply.
Such converse held they ; and the evening fell,
And all the darkening hill-top peaceful slept.

Thus slipped the time away, and with it news
Of Edwin from the mighty city came,—
His pictures and their sale, the hopes he fed
Of seeing Amy quickly for his wife,
And trifles sweet, that lovers only know ;
These were his letters ; nothing in themselves
To others, but they made her heart right glad.
What wonder, therefore, when they seldom came,

She thought herself forgotten? and would sit,
Pale, from her lattice gazing down the hill,
Her soft white hand cradling a softer cheek,
Intent on Edwin, and the bright spring-morn,
Which saw their meeting; and the time slipped on;
Yet still no news, no wished-for tidings came
Of the young painter; and the swallows fled
England's wide downs, and misty miles of moor,
For sunny islands washed by southern tides.

It was late Autumn, when the sorrow fell,
Sharp and unlooked-for, on that quiet home.
Edwin had married!
And when the bells proclaimed his marriage-tie
With the fair daughter of some lordly line,
All his well-wishers deemed her nobly wooed,
Nor thought of one who mourned his broken vows!
Edwin was dazzled: all the city rang
His praises: hearty hands were thrust in his
By friends, who knew the painter when a boy:
Even the busy loitered at his name,
And crushed to see his pictures; with the rest

Crept Amy, trembling, through the city's roar,
Heard all his praises, as, with swimming head,
She threaded silently the buzzing throng,—
Saw, and yet saw not; for her mind had flown
Back to a forest, and a fern-clad stile,
A humble landscape-painter, and a dream
Spun in the golden summertide of love!
And, musing thus in solitude of heart,
Deep in a shadowy still recess she stood,
At the last picture down the varied line,—
“*A Glimpse of Sunlight.*” Bitterly his words
“Not till I cease to love you,” floated back
Chill on her heart, and wearily she fell
Upon her father, murmuring “Take me home.”
That night she quit her senses. O'er the couch
With woman's tender care her father watched,
Listening heartbroken to her ceaseless moan;
But, when the morning flushed their native hill,
Carried her far from those once-happy scenes
To a snug fishing-village, westward washed
By the swift ocean—there they made their home.
And there, at eve, upon the rock-lined shore,

Amy wailed out her sorrow to the wind,
Or flung her voice athwart the cool wide sea,
Deeming that haply Edwin heard her cry.

And was the painter happy? He had won
The golden coronal he craved—a name
To live behind him in the mouths of men,
Wealth in profusion, and a high-born wife.
But, when the dazzling novelty had passed,
When the gay colours faded from his dream,
When his cold love had yet still colder grown
To her he wedded for her name and wealth,
When in the lonely studio he bent
Over his pictures, came “a still small voice”
Whispering of one, who mourned his broken vows.
Then glowed his canvas with a forest-scene:
A flowery wood-path, and a fern-clad stile,
A blue-eyed maiden veiled in golden hair.
And, leaning on his hands, he wailed aloud
In all the bitter loneliness of grief.
Thus mourned he inly, and unsympathised,
Bearing alone his heavy weight of woe,

Nor saw that she he wedded daily drooped
Beneath consumption's ever-wasting hand,
Till his life-wearing meditations snapt,
For him to find himself bereft of her,
Whom he had vowed to cherish, keep, and love;
Gone, with no farewell-word, to seek a home
In some dim land beyond the silent stars.

So time went slipping onward; yet no change,
No change in Amy, and the old man mourned
His darling's woe, and comfort would have none:
But silent sat, and watched from morn to eve
The thin blue smoke-wreaths from his pipe-bowl curl,
With Amy's sunny head upon his knees,
Smoothing the golden ripples of her hair,
Hearing her laughter, but not gladdened by it,—
Her wild, unearthly laughter, and the burst
From pallid lips of anguish-laden words.
And thus the days and months went rolling down
Time's widening channel, and a year had sped,
E'en to the day, since they had left their home,
The little thatch-clad cottage on the hill;

And, when the morn came up the dewy land,
Gilding her lattice, Amy sought the shore,
Her wonted haunt in bright warm summer days;
And there long lingered, while the tide ran in,
By the quick passer-by not seldom seen,
Or hardy fisherman, who with rough hand
Wiped silent tear-drops from his furrowed cheeks,
Pitying, in all true sympathy of heart,
"The poor daft maiden" as they used to call her.
But, ere the midday sun stood overhead,
A stranger, stepping down the shingly beach,
Stopped silent, and, with fixed hand-shaded eyes,
Saw seated on an old tide-stranded boat
A blue-eyed maiden; and with faltering voice
He burst out "Amy, darling, it is I!
Forgive me, for I knew not what I did!
Speak but one word, one little word, and say
That you forgive me all my faithlessness!"
Her only answer was a vacant stare!
And then loud laughter. But when Edwin told
His self-inflicted sorrow and remorse,
His maddened thirst for affluence and fame,

The death of her he wedded for her wealth,
Until unwittingly his words retraced
The airy bridge that spans the distant Past;
And spoke of one far forest, and a dream
Spun in the golden summertide of love;
She rose—and looked—a long and senseless gaze—
Broke from him with a scream, and wildly rushed,
Ere he could hinder her, along the rocks,
And plunged herself and sorrows in the sea.
In vain for Edwin that he smote the waves
With loving hands to come to her; in vain
He, holding her cold form within his arms,
Stepped dripping from the water up the shore;
In vain he chafed her lifeless limbs, and kissed,
As he would wake her, all her golden hair.

That eve with trembling hands they laid her low,
Decked with fresh flowerbells, on a snow-white couch,
Before the seaward-gazing lattice-pane
Of her own chamber! where the wind might come,
And, entering softly, learn and tell the tale
To its wild sister-spirits on the sea.

And there, from morn to eve, the old man hung,
Silent, heart-broken, till they buried her.
But, when the sad procession mutely stole
One soft cool morning down the sloping street,
His voice went out in one long bitter wail,
And, ere the sound had vanished from his lips,
His weary soul fled forth to meet his child.

So they were laid together: and one mound
Received the rude-carved cross, which Edwin placed
To mark their rest: and, with the dying year,
He left the village for a foreign land.
A few short months! and long the grass had grown,
Swept roughly by December's bitter air:
A few short months! and broken lay the cross,
And they forgotten!

But the gossips tell
How, after many a year, a stranger came,
Stooping, gray-headed, to the little town,
And, dragging out a weary time of pain,

Within a solitary cottage died,
Friendless, uncared-for; with his latest breath,
Moaning that God would send some pitying hand,
Close by the broken cross to lay him low.

1867.

FROM "A WINTER IN A LIFE."

DAY's rosy glow is stealing from the land,
Day's rosy footprints quit the twilight seas ;
And, while we speak, the weary sun-god dips
Down to the underworld, and all is dark.

Blue grow the heavens, and strown with silver stars,
Up from dim forests queenly sails the moon ;
Calm grow the lapsing waves, that moon and stars
May see themselves float mirrored far below.

Come, love, the fragrant garden slumbrous lies
Beneath its coverlet of fern and leaf ;
And, lulled to rest by breeze and song-bird, clasps
Its babes—the flowers—close to its heaving breast.

Come, love, and pace the moonlit terrace-walk,
Where we may view yon leagues of voiceless sea,
Dark-wooded hills and fleecy beds of cloud,
The gray old church-tower, and the vale beyond.

Sit here, my darling! let me hold in mine
Thy soft pink hand—so pink, so slender, sweet—
And to the night thy waving locks unbind,
And bid them fall and kiss my fevered cheeks.

Lean over me, my own, and let me view
Myself in those deep lucid orbs of thine;
Lay here thy head, thy wealth of scented hair,
And here the crimson petals of thy lips.

Pillow 'gainst mine thy veined cheeks' peach-bloom,
Bid here thy honeyed mouth's rich rosebud spread
On mine a heaven of kisses sweet, and here,
Here let thy pure cool bosom slowly heave.

O God! thus, thus to die, my darling, prest
Cheek lapt on cheek, and hand in hand close-locked,
Thus, thus to die—even though hell's red sea
Rolled at my feet—were heaven, were heaven itself!

THE LADY ISOBEL.

THE level lawn spreads bright and dry
Beneath a warm blue summer-sky ;
A long green-gleaming lane runs by
The Grange in Foxley dell.

Afar the river sluggish slides,
High-swollen by daily-rising tides,
Lapping slow barges' dusky sides,
And from a copse the lane divides
The Lady Isobel.

A hazel copse, where thickly swarm
Gay children, 'neath the sunlight warm,
Pressing the gray fern's slender form,
Down Foxley's leafy dell.

And, where low-trailing woodbine weaves
Its tangled fairy-veil of leaves,
At sundown through long summer-eves
To roam the wold her lattice leaves
The Lady Isobel.

Athwart the long dark frontage glance
Bright golden gleams, in varied dance,
And all sleeps hazy, like a trance,
In Foxley's leafy dell.
Hazy, and wrapt in filmy shade,
A dewy gloom dusk laurels made,
And, by the lodge-gate moss-inlaid,
Passes, to seek the distant glade,
The Lady Isobel.

A gentle winning maiden she,
Loved by the labourers on the lea,
A fairy good she seems to be
In Foxley's leafy dell.
Threading the mazy sylvan scene,
Brushing with shadowy robes the green—

Robes whereon sparkle golden sheen,
At evening by the gate is seen
The Lady Isobel.

There, with full-foliaged trees above her,
The lonely lodge-gate leaning over,
I met her from the field of clover
Fringing the leafy dell.

And 'neath the flowering sycamore
We heard the busy city's roar,
The gray sea rolling on the shore,
While myriad shadows floated o'er
The Lady Isobel.

Soft from the farms and meadows near,
Lowing, far distant, but yet clear,
Came whispering to the attentive ear
Through Foxley's leafy dell.
And there with words the hours we led,
Till, drawing tight her mantle red
Over her shoulders, Evening fled ;
Anon " We may not linger," said
The Lady Isobel.

Calm, overhead, fair cloudland slept ;
Beneath, the river sluggish crept ;
And homeward through the dusk we stept

Up Foxley's leafy dell.

From far the noise of distant sea,
Of housing bird, of murmurous bee,
Of labour quitting glad the lea,
While many a word dropt silverly
From Lady Isobel.

And on by warm rich-fruited walls,
Whence, flung at will in airy falls,
Echo breathed answer to our calls

Up Foxley's leafy dell.

By garden-gate, up winding ways,
Folded in silver veil of haze,
The dewy trembling laurel-maze
We traversed ; I did nought but gaze
At Lady Isobel.

On, up the moss-grown garden-floor,
And lo ! the Grange's open door ;

And, turning silent towards the moor,

I looked o'er Foxley dell.

Vacant and mute I saw her stand,

Smoothing with soft pink-dimpled hand

Her dark brown tresses' braided band,

And musing on a foreign land—

The Lady Isobel.

And gazing, as she pensive mused,

My trembling lips their words refused,

And all was tearful, dim-diffused,

O'er Foxley's leafy dell.

Above, the dusky-winged bats flew

In circles, through the darkening blue,

And faintly dying, like the view

At distance, fell my word "Adieu!"

To Lady Isobel.

Calm grew the garden, rich in bloom,

And folded deep in languid gloom,

Calm slept, and peaceful, like a tomb,

The Grange in Foxley dell.

And, as the light began to fade,
I passed the lodge-gate moss-inlaid,
Leaving, where wrapt in filmy shade
A dewy gloom dusk laurels made,
The Lady Isobel.

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A SPRING WALK.

We left the glaring village far behind,—
A merry party—six of us in all ;
We left its voices, and with footsteps glad
Passed by the weedy pool along the lane,
Till soon a gateway brought us into fields
Starred with bright cowslips.

Hither we had come
All in a body, bandying words at will
From one to other ; but, before our feet
Had wandered far, by mutual impulse led,
Parting, in pairs we walked at little spaces ;
Haply 'twas only fortune made it so—
A break of chance—or conversation drawn

To one close point of interest, that forbade
The talkers separate : but I cannot tell !
And on we roamed, while from the village rose
Cattle's soft sounds, and hum of toiling men,
Athwart the air ; and all the field was fresh.
Slowly meanwhile the land began to rise
Beneath us, till with downward gaze we stood
Upon a ridge, that, sloping sheer to right
Into a hollow dingle fringed with wood,
Led by a fallen gate the winding path
Into a green seven-acre.

Here we stopped,
And, standing on a gentle hillock, looked, .
And saw the valley sweep towards the sea,
And saw the sea sweep to the level land,
Safe in their roads the anchored ships, and once
A train flashed by adown its shining way.

Then, on again, across the billowy grass,
Swept by the warm cloud-shadows, till we came
Before a stile, that brought us into paths

Cut through the tangled thickets of the wood.
And all was flowery, ankle-deep in bloom,
Crimson and green, and golden with the sun,
Bright azure gleams, pale pink, and snowy white;
Primrose and violet, breathing of the Spring,
And weeping dewy tears to think that soon
Their time was come to wither into shade.
Vain, vain the forest-children's wishful cry,
And soft petitionings of loving hearts
Awhile to linger: and it made me sad!
But, when the question came, 'Why was I mute?'
I found no words to answer in, but held
My way in silence, till the feeling passed.
So on we roamed, and, roaming, bent to pluck
Fresh flowers, that held wet faces up to us,
As though reproaching; but we heeded not.
On, through the varied thickness of the wood,
Now deep and bowery, now with little hands
Stretched out, to let the sunshine travel through;
And oft the branches, reverent, stooped to kiss
As tender maiden-cheeks as ever shone
In peach-like bloom, or with green fingers touched

Soft garments' hem, and wept to be removed.
Words did not fail me now ; in sooth the time
In pleasant converse slipped so fast away,
That, ere we thought of turning, we had gained
Our turning-place—a sunlit eminence.
And here again we lingered, looking down
Upon the village, sister to our own :
The churchyard sleeping round the gray old church,
The sunshine sleeping on the nameless graves,
The yew-trees' shadow, and the wicket-gate,
The straggling road, the clean white cottages,
The village-well—the gossips' favourite haunt,
The school-freed children, and from fields afar
The eager labourers bringing slowly home
Their weary teams ; and all the sight was peace !
And then we likewise set our faces home,
Back through the woods ; and divers flowery paths,
Talking, we traversed, to the stile ; and soon
Into the green seven-acre came once more.
Thence down along the ridge into the lane,
Passed by the weedy pool, and long white rails
Stretching between us and a level lawn ;

Passed through the shadows of the silent forge,
A vine-clad cottage, and the empty school,
Near which we parted ; and the evening fell,
And all the darkening village slept.

LINES WRITTEN AT TALYLLYN

(MERIONETHSHIRE).

Soft summer's dewy shadows fall :

And tiny waves and moonlight make

A silver trouble on the lake,

And summer's warm is over all.

Thin slips of fleecy cloudlets sail

About the mountain's rocky brows,

Or move among the topmost boughs,

Stretched out to catch the faintest gale.

Up through the valley comes a breath

Of ocean, breaking blue, afar,

On sands, beneath the Vesper-star,

And scents the evening, calm as death.

Calm, and as voiceless as the peace
That floats o'er many a kirkyard-grave,
Where winds forget the grass to wave;
And e'en the meadow-minstrels cease.

AFTER LONG YEARS.

AFTER long years—alone the high gods know
What things await us, bright days or dark woe,
Or fame, or shame, or hopes, or coward fears,
 After long years!

After long years—alone the high gods see
The end of great vows, now heard trustingly;
What hope will grasp (hope, that our life endears),
 After long years!

After long years—who recks what then will be?
The gods, who know, are they more glad than we?
If *now* be gladness, death may come, or tears,
 After long years!

SONG.

THE foam may love the white sand,
Soft music love the shell,
The mower love the pleasant shade,
The thirsty flocks the well,

The bees may love the wild thyme,
The winds may love the lea,
The leaf of green its parent-bough,
The mariner the sea,

Green sedge may love the mirror-lake,
The antlered deer the stream,
The Knight his lady's red ripe mouth,
The world the morning beam,

Lilies may love the maiden's bier,
The vine the southern wall,
Roses may love the maiden's cheek,
But I—I love them all.

I love sweet laughter from bright lips
Of rosy village girls,
I love to catch, amid the farms,
Gay shout of country churls,

I love the springtime's early blooms,
And faint church bells afar,
And silver gleam of river-reach,
And evening's silent star,

I love fair-fruited autumn-lands,
The purple, red, and gold,
I love the glory shed on us
From grand great days of old,

I love to see, on maiden's breast,
Red roses rise and fall;
But, darling, though I love them well,
I love thee more than all.

SONG.

"TELL me, gardener, truly,
Where bright roses grow ;
In what sunny flower-bed ?"
I know ! I know !
In your sweet cheeks, lady,
The brightest roses grow !

" Tell me, thou that settest
Rich gems in a row,
What are the gayest jewels ?"
I know ! I know !
Your beaded eyes, sweet lady,
The gems that brightest glow.

“ On what river’s bosom

 The glossiest ripples flow,
Like to warm brown tresses?”

 I know ! I know !
Over your bosom, lady,
 The glossiest ripples flow !

“ The sweetest voice that lingers—

 Tell me ere I go—
Lingers through sunlit woodlands?”

 I know ! I know !
Out of your pink lips, lady,
 The sweetest voices flow !

THE TWO HEARTS.

I **stole** a lock of your silken hair,

Madeline!

Its soft sweet fragrance was so rare

It flooded all the charmed air,

Madeline!

I laid it warm in a tiny heart,

Madeline!

Your hair, in a tiny golden heart,

Kissed it, and vowed we would not part,

Madeline!

A word, a tender look I stole,

Madeline!

And the magic keys wherewith to unroll
Love's sacred portals in your soul,
Madeline !

I laid them warm in a loving heart,
Madeline !

And beneath my bosom beat that heart,
And I vowed that we would never part,
Madeline !

"TELLE EST LA VIE!"

Two fond hearts, void of care and pain,

Roaming adown a leafy lane,

The queen-moon sailing, on her wane,

Up in an ebon sea.

And, 'neath the churchyard's ivied wall,

They heard the wakeful song-birds' call ;

But sweeter sounds from their lips did fall,

Than bird to them more musical.

Telle est la vie !

A heart, aglow with another's glance,

To another pressed in mazy dance,

Sweeping, in mad continuance,

Over a golden sea.

A heart, outworn with toil and lone,
Reaping the fruit it had never sown,
Striving for one—unseen, unknown—
For one he might not call his own.

Telle est la vie !

A blissful land, where sunbeams play,
Gay marriage-bells, that seem to say
To one who will be wed to-day,

"New life we tell to thee!"

A far-off room, a lonely bed,
Cold rain and whistling wind o'erhead,
To his long home another sped,
Another numbered with the dead.

Telle est la vie !

MY ROSE.

ONCE I found a tiny rosebud
That was all the world to me,
Found it in a village-garden,
Down beside the western sea.
And O! the shadows light did pass
Over the deep and dewy grass,
Beside the western sea!

Tender were the hands that nursed it
Day by day, and hour by hour;
Happy were the eyes that saw it
Growing there, a lovely flower.
And O! the shadows light did pass
Over the deep and dewy grass,
That waved around my flower!

Soon my flower and I were parted,
Parted many miles of land ;
When I homeward came, 'twas vanished,
Gathered by another hand !
And O ! the shadows sad did pass
Over the long and weeping grass
Upon the mournful land !

On the ground was left a petal,
From the spoiler's hand let fall ;
So I made a grave to hold it
'Neath the ivied garden-wall.
And O ! the shadows sad did pass
Over the long and weeping grass
Beside the garden-wall !

—Made a grave, with trees o'ershaded,
Cool, and from the world apart,
Where at rest I laid the petal,
And at peace my weary heart.
And O ! the shadows lightly pass
Over the deep and dewy grass,
Above my buried heart !

WINTER : NOW, AND THEN.

Now burst the mornings white and chill,
A few dead leaves the ground bestrew ;
And crisp on valley, mead, and hill,
The winter sparkles to the blue.

At eve far-distant village-bells
Chime their wild music to the sky :
At eve the frosty brightness tells
That Christmas-time is drawing nigh.

The naked woods, the hard dry roads,
The shivering flocks, the leafless lane,
The warm fires, lighting rich abodes,
Whisper that Christmas comes again.

Whisper the year is speeding fast
To barren Winter's icy hall ;
To some a golden-woven past,
To some long months of pain recall.

To me a happy Christmas, spent
'Neath sacred Home's protecting shade,
A sunny maiden-smile, that lent,
To cheer and gladden all, its aid.

A happy Christmas, when at morn
In converse, lady, you and I
Together roamed the crisp cold lawn,
Beneath the cold blue winter sky.

A happy Christmas, when we wove
Gay holly-garlands for the hall,
And little thought we then that Love
Was weaving there his coronal.

When, with the ripples of your head
O'er the chair's carved oaken rail
All glossy showering, you read
Some simple lay or lover's tale.

And lo! once more the village-bells
Chime their wild music to the sky;
Once more the frosty brightness tells
That Christmas-time is drawing nigh.

Once more our busy fingers weave
Gay holly-garlands for the hall,
Once more the panelled walls receive
Our festive Christmas-coronal.

Yet all is not the same! A ray
Of sunny smilings, wont to fill
With gladness all, has died away,
And well-belovèd lips are still!

And void of thee the loved abode,
Empty the carvèd oaken chair;
Dust crumbles where of old time glowed
The ripples of thy glossy hair.

But though beneath a foreign sky
Thou standest on a foreign sod,
I count it comfort low to lie,
Lady, where once thy feet have trod.

THE PAST.

THROUGH the garden winds were sighing,
 Gleams of mellow moonlight fell
On the couch, where she was lying,
 Near the rich-hued oriel.
 Streamed the light aslant the bay,
 O'er her bosom as she lay,
 Freed, at dying of the day,
 From life's hard school.
Through the midnight's warm blue air
Stole the silver down her hair,
Down my darling's braided hair—
 O God! how beautiful!

Soft, rich robes, in which to fold her,
 Languid lay around the room;
Flowers bent downward to behold her
 Sleeping lonely in the gloom.

Flowers, which we in days gone by
Plucked beneath a cloudless sky ;
Flowers, which soon would droop and die
 By Death's stern rule !
Slender fingers I had pressed
Now were crossed upon her breast,
On my darling's lifeless breast—
 O God ! how beautiful !

Vain to touch each blue-veined finger,
Vain to kiss each dark-fringed eye,
Where love's light was wont to linger
 In the sunny days gone by.
Could I place her in the grave
With the tokens that she gave ?
Could I see the cold weeds wave,
 And bear to wait ?—
Wait, till soon a black-robed train
Waft me to a voiceless plain,
Where unresting spirits reign—
 O God ! how desolate !

* * * *

But I knew it was no maiden
Who beneath the moonlight slept,
For a message sorrow-laden
O'er my weary spirit crept :
Mingled with a wailing blast
Landward from wide ocean cast,
Murmuring, "'Tis the Golden Past,
Dead as days *will* die !"
Dead and gone ! in vain the tear,
Shed in silence o'er her bier :
Lonely must I linger here—
O God ! how mournfully !

Dead ! but still I cannot send thee
To the dark grave's icy hand ;
Who will greet thee ? who befriend thee
In the mystic shadow-land ?
Never shall green earth or sea
Tear my clasping arms from thee—
Tear my darling one from me
To lay her by !
Never take her into gloom

From her fragrant, peaceful room ;
She is too radiant for the tomb,
And loved too tenderly !

* * * *

Deep in shadow many a token
Pleading, lingered here and there ;
Weeping lay in dust, and broken ;—
Links to all that was so fair :
Converse spent in charmed hours,
Rich brown hair, and withered flowers,
All that cruel Death devours
By Fate's hard rule.
Love's low language breathed alone,
Music's sweet entrancing tone,
Lips, I might not call mine own—
O God ! how beautiful !

Then I fancied, as above them
Swept the moon behind a cloud,
Hands unseen together wove them,
Enrobed in a silken shroud.

Trembling, faint, I wrapt it warm
Round her breathless marble form ;
It may shield her safe from storm,
 'Neath Death's cold sky !
Laid her white hands near her heart—
Kissed—O God ! I cannot part—
Cannot from my darling part
 For all eternity !

Leave her with me ! only leave her !
Spirits hover through the gloom,
Arms are ready to receive her
In the Future's sunless tomb !
Hark ! a voice floats down the blast,
Landward from wide ocean cast :
“ Keep her, then, thy golden Past,
 Poor heart, and wait ! ”
“ Keep her ? ” ay, for ever here !
Let me weep beside her bier,
By my darling's moonlit bier,—
 O God ! how desolate !

MY SECRET.

A FRAGMENT.

THERE is a happy place of flowers,
A place of dewy deep cool grass,
Where, in the warm of May's bright hours,
I lie, and watch gray cloudlets pass,
Wind-wafted, up the blue heaven-meadows clear,
Like silvern swans upon an azure mere.

And nigh, and lending all the shade
And coolness of its blossomed trees,
An orchard's gentle slopes are laid ;
And faint, like faintliest-heaving seas,
The tremulous waver of its thick grass is.
· happy place of flowers is nigh to this !

Nigh : sundered only by a hedge
Of thickly-pleachèd wilding-rose ;
And under runs a gentle ledge
Of flowers and grass, wherethrough there goes
A thread-like runlet to a rushy pool ;
And this green ledge is where I lie in cool.

For here upon a day I came,
(A day, long long whiles laid in rest,)
The sun was but a dying flame,
And crimson bars were in the west—
And One too came—a maiden with bright face,
And this is why I love this flowery place !

And once again she came ; and I
Did tell her, in that happy place,
Somewhat I learnt, I know not why
Or whence, save that that soft sweet face,
And gray blue eyes, and sunny hair that fell
O'er her white breast, meseemed, had some strange
spell.

And at my secret, slow did fall
The delicate curtain of each eye ;
And sweet, as sweetest madrigal
Of song-birds, was her faint reply,
That told a secret like to mine, and wove
Round us gold glamour of a dream of love !

* * * *

THE WOODS OF ELD.

O WINTER woods,

I hold you very fair !

I heard the north-wind rise and blow

Your twisted branches high and low,

The while I wandered to and fro,

And pleasant converse kept, I trow ;

For she was there !

And through bare trunks light echoes fell :

“ O winter woods, I loved you well,

For she was there !

Yes ! she was there ! ”

O gay spring woods,

I hold you very fair !

I pressed your violet-broidered ways,
I pushed aside your tangled maze,
I felt the sunshine's warmth of rays,—
Ah! happy, happy were those days,

For she was there!

And mellow echoes breathed and fell:
"O gay spring woods, I loved you well,

For she was there!

Yes! she was there!"

O summer woods,
I hold you very fair!
Your foliaged trees I roamed atween,
I laid amid your leaves of green
My head, and thought on what had been,
And sorely, sorely wept, I ween,—

She was not there!

And mournful echoes rose and fell:
"O summer woods, I loved you well,

When she was there!

When she was there!"

O autumn woods,
I hold you very fair!
The sun had bound his golden zone
On leaf and fern, on mossy stone;
Alone I came to you, alone!
And bitter, bitter was my moan,—
She was not there!
And up the wold, in mournful swell,
The same sad burthen rose and fell:
“O autumn woods, I loved you well,
When she was there!
When she was there!”

THE WOODS OF ELD.

O woods, I once did say in song,
I loved and held you very fair,
Your laden branches, gnarled and long,
Your wealth of leaves—when one was there.

But now that all is past and gone,
Now that all dreams are more than vain,
I love to muse with you, alone,
On days that may not come again.

And though no more your bright leaves shine
Upon me with their former glow ;
Though ne'er so gay, in melting line,
Your shadows flicker to and fro ;

Though all—whence I my life did take,
And joy—are vanished into air ;
O woods, I love you for her sake,
For her dear sake that made you fair !

DAISIES AND VIOLETS.

DAISIES in the meadows sweet,
Daisies hung with dewdrops clear,
Where my love and I did meet
In the Spring-time of the year.

Violets in the ferny dale,
Violets hung with dewdrops clear,
Where I told the old, old tale
In the Spring-time of the year.

Daisies, breathing wishful sighs,
Violets, speaking vain regrets,
Lay them where my darling lies,
Daisies, tears, and violets!

A DAY-DREAM.

I saw a face at my lattice
 Pressed close to the rattling pane,
And the cheeks, that once were rosy,
 Were sprinkled with summer rain.

I saw a cold form lying
 On a purple-covered bier,
And nigh to the dark-fringed eyelid
 There hung an icy tear.

I woke ! and the face at my lattice
 Was a rosebud shining through ;
The cold form—a broken lily,
 The tear—a drop of dew !

THE ANGEL AND THE SUNSHINE.

LAST evening I saw an angel
His great white pinions wave,
And he passed through a quiet churchyard,
And stopped at an infant's grave.

And taking a ray of sunshine
Out of his pinions bright,
He laid it among the violets,
And it formed a cross of light.

This morning I went to the churchyard
Amid the cool spring air ;
The angel had flown to heaven,
But the sunshine still was there !

SONG.

THE harbour-bar
Gleams bright and far,
And fresh and salt is the scent of the foam ;
And thick on the shingle
The fishermen mingle,
And the wives stand watching them off from home.

The last stout foot,
In its fisher-boot,
Has left its press on the edge of the sand ;
And stretched are the tight sails
To the morning's white gales,
Blowing so fair over sea and land.

O morning-wind,
Blow soft, blow kind !
Nor whiten the waves with angry foam ;
Give no fresh dead to them,
Make no grave-bed in them :
Pity the wives and babes at home !

SHADOWS.

Oh ! sadly fall on hill and lea
The shadows of the weary day,
And wafted from the wailing sea
A long low murmur seems to say—
To say :
“ Shine on, thou golden sun,
Thine hour will soon be done !
Ah ! well-a-day ! ”

Cold drives the rain upon the world,
And homeless is the north-wind's cry,
And, 'mid the darkness thickly curled,
Sad tones of sorrow seem to sigh—
To sigh :
“ Bloom on, thou shining rose,
Thy short life soon will close,
For thou must die ! ”

Oh ! sadly fall on loving hearts

The shadows of life's weary way,

And, heedless of the tear that starts,

A mournful message seems to say—

To say :

“ Thee, and thy love, the tomb

Soon, soon will fold in gloom !

Ah ! well-a-day ! ”

PER FLUMINA MORS.

THE boat rides far o'er the harbour-bar,

Beyond the little town ;

The sea runs white, and the sun is bright

On the tight-stretched sails and brown.

Ho ! fishers, ho !

Cheerily go !

Ho ! fishers, ho to sea !

The night is black with the tempest-rack,

And the maimed boat helpless drives ;

At the helm stands Death, who mocking saith,

“ Mine now are all your lives !”

Ho ! fishers, ho !

Fearlessly go !

Ho ! fishers, ho to death !

At home, in dreams, each goodwife deems
The well-loved boat she spies,
And an angel stands, who with gentle hands
It safely guides, and cries :
 “ Ho ! fishers, ho !
 Joyfully go !
 Ho ! fishers, ho to Heaven ! ”

YEA OR NAY.

O THE yellow gleam of seashore !
O the blue bright summer day !
When she listened to my pleadings,
Answering neither 'yea' nor 'nay.'

O the cold gray leagues of seashore !
O the dripping autumn day !
When she listened to another,
Answering neither 'yea' nor 'nay.'

O the weary waste of seashore !
Cruel shingles ! where It lay,
Cold, and silent, till the judgment,
Answering neither 'yea' nor 'nay.'

SONGS OF AUTUMN.

MORN.

O THICK and white lies the autumn dew
On the meadows' deep long grasses,
And fresh and fair is the gay sky's blue,
And fresh each wind that passes.

The leaves are raining from off the trees,
Tall oak and elm-trees olden,
And a white sweet light is over the seas,
And the eastern hills gleam golden.

I walk in the autumn woodland ways,
Among the trees' dead glory,
And the brown leaves tell of buried days,
And the red of a like sad story.

O withered leaves! O brown and red!
Keep ye the tales of sadness;
Mind me no more of fair days dead,
Mock not the Present's gladness!

NOON.

THE noonday sun in shadow cast
The dark house-corners cool and deep;
The southern terrace, as I past,
Panted and glowed in lazy sleep.

Anon uprose a gust of wind,
And shook the withering russet leaves.
Bearing, within its bosom shrined,
Gay dreams of buried summer eves.

And, with the wind so fresh, so fair,
Like that I feel about me now,
A maiden, with rich wealth of hair,
Came climbing up the hill's short brow.

We met: and talking roamed away
Towards the autumn woods of old,
Paused, where the mellow shadows lay,
To look across the open wold.

And saw the twisted branches meet,
And all their withering burdens wave,
And heard the leaves about our feet,
Dead leaves, to deck dead summer's grave.

Then down the winding sunny road,
Fringing the copse's eastern side ;
And felt the warmth, that yonder glowed,
In lustre, o'er the crested tide.

And, round a corner, left behind
The hostel looking on the sea ;
The tossing roadsteads vessel-lined ;
The wave-washed piles upon their lee.

Then down along a pathway, laid
Into a meadow, daily kissed
By oozy rise of sea, that made
The land about one marsh of mist.

And, where the pathway widening met
The village highway, sloping still,
Homeward we both our faces set,
And parted underneath the hill.

EVE.

PURPLE gloom of wooded hills
Sloping to the autumn valley,
Distant voice of leaf-hid rills
Plashing, dashing down the valley.
Plashing, dashing, dashing, plashing,
Down along the autumn valley.

Twittering birds 'neath cottage-eaves,
Shade of oak and elm-trees olden,
Layer on layer of changing leaves,
Brown and russet, green and golden.
Shining, twining, twining, shining,
Brown and russet, green and golden.

From the hill-top, crowned with fir,
Walked we to the autumn valley,
Kissed by threads of gossamer,
As we roamed along the valley.
Roaming, roaming, in the gloaming,
Down along the autumn valley.

NIGHT.

FADE not so fast, ye yellow autumn leaves,

Brown autumn leaves,

Nor haste to quit your parent tree!

God's winds are blowing fierce and cold,

And wait to waft ye o'er the wold

To moulder on the lea,

Full wearily!

Ye autumn leaves, fade not so fast,

So fast!

Fade not so fast, ye golden summer dreams,

Fair-woven dreams!

Nor haste mine eager eyes to flee!

God's sorrow-storms blow fierce and strong

And wait to hurry ye along

Into a gloomy sea,

Full wearily!

Ye golden dreams, fade not so fast,

So fast!

THE GIFT OF TEARS.

In cradle, at the close of day,
A little new-born infant lay ;
And o'er her, robed in white array
Three angels bright were bending.
She slept : the angel-hands were prest
In blessing on the infant-breast ;
Two said, " She hath been fully blest :
Our task hath now its ending !

" A loving heart ; and strong to bear,
By God's grace, aught of toil or care ;
And meek her crown of fame to wear—

The gifts that we have meted.
High purpose in the years to be,
By fears uncramp't ; and purity—" "
" Nay," said the eldest of the three,
" Our work is not completed !"

And then she sought, with noiseless feet,
The last house in the sleeping street,
Wrapped in its snowy winding-sheet,
 And up the stairs went stealing.
There, in a cold and wretched room,
There, in the beating wind and gloom,
Dead lay an infant, in its bloom,
 A mother o'er it kneeling!

The wind sang at the window-pane :
The mother's streaming tears did stain
The little cold cheek with their rain,
 In death laid heedless sleeping.
The angel bent down o'er the bed,
And kissed the little quiet dead,
And one of those bright teardrops shed
 She took unto her keeping,

And set across the mother's eyes
Her hand, that glad her thoughts might rise
To see her baby in the skies,
 In dreams of joyous meeting.

Then to the happy home her way
Took swiftly, where, 'mid all things gay,
The little new-born infant lay,
And gave her sisters greeting.

And, where the baby-bosom made
A soft sweet home, the tear she laid;
And to her sisters gently said
(Ere heavenwards their steps bending),
“Barren and cold, through all the years,
The best gift is, that life endears,
Without this last—the Gift of Tears:
Our task hath *now* its ending!”

A LAST NEW-YEAR'S EVE.

“Nor ring the bells to-night, lad!—the last night of
the year,—

Because my arms are not so strong or so brawny as
as they were?

Because I totter and tremble, and my hair is all so
white?

‘Dying?’ I know not—I care not—I’ll ring the bells
to-night!

“But bring me the lanthorn, lad, and come, ’tis time
we were there;

The hours are creeping slowly along, cowed with
the thick night air,

And the gray old tower stands up from the church-
yard deep in snow,

And the bare bleak lindens whisper a dirge for the
dead below.

"Hark! through the belfry-bars the wind of the
winter-time
Seems colder and louder moaning, the higher our
footsteps climb,
Colder and louder we hear it down yon hill-top's
shadowy brow—
Colder and louder—God knows, it all seems colder
now!

"Set down the lanthorn, lad, and put your hands to
the ropes;
We must ring the Old Year out, the joys, and the
fears, and hopes,
'The ruined hopes and the granted, the toil, and the
care, and sin;
The volume will soon be closed—and the New Year
coming in.*

"Why it seems but the other day that I heard these
same bells ring
In a dear dead year, when my life, lad, was fresh and
in its spring,

* *Vide* "In Memoriam."

When I held my own in the village, not unknown
then—long ago—

And a dear face shone that sleepeth now soft where
the daisies grow.

“ I’m hard and rough to love,—too rough and hard,
you’ll say,—

But I think, did she live, there is one, lad, who’d
haply tell you ‘ Nay !’

And she’d tell of a fair sweet time, of a dream spun
with golden thread—

Ah God ! that ’twas all so short, so short ! ah God !
that the days are dead !

“ A sweet short dream, when we wandered by flowery
croft and lea,

Dim woods, and tangled pathways, and low shores of
gray cold sea,

God’s meadows of green beneath us, God’s meadows
of blue above,

And our only one companion, lad, was a little elf
Love.

“And he led us to pleasant places, where we saw the
 shadows pass
O'er the pink white apple-blossoms starring the long
 lush grass ;
Her deep eyes looked in mine, her hair fell down on
 her blue-veined breast —
Arm on soft arm enfolded, and cheek to warm cheek
 prest.

“But the land was all too bright, lad, the day too
 fair to last ;
For the sky grew gloomy with rain-clouds, and
 wearily rose the blast ;
The dream was too sweet, and they snapt it, they tore
 my darling from me,
And I cursed them then for parting us—Hell knows
 it, how bitterly !

“Hell knew it, and took the curses, and cherished
 them kindly too,
For I cursed the God that dwells on high, beyond
 the voiceless blue.

That was *then*, not now ; and my auger I trampled
it out amain,
And in praying 'twas for her happiness, I loved them
all again.

“ Ah, lad ! 'twas hard to leave her—so hard !—may
you never know
The maddening agony we felt, when we parted long
ago ;
And hard to hear were the words they said, though
for comfort they were meant ;
A little my heart rebelled—as away alone I went.

“ ‘ All for the best we parted,’—great God ! was it
all for the best ?
'Tis easy enough to say it, lad, when your own heart
is at rest,—
To say, when safe in haven your own bark at anchor
lies,
'Tis all for the best' that your neighbour's drifts a
wreck 'neath windy skies.

“Parted, I thought, for ever, as I leant o’er the ves-
sel’s side,
And the bright beach faded behind us, borne down
by the ebbing tide :
Or only come home to find her dead and gone with
no farewell-breath,
Or haply severed from me by a wider gulf than death.

“So northward we sailed, still northward ; the bil-
lows roared and rolled,
And I longed for the blue vast icebergs, and the
kingdoms of snow and cold,
For the freezing waste of whiteness, unmarked by
track of men,
Or some traitorous reef to wreck us,—the devil was
in me then.

“And he was the god I drank to, and in deep cups
pledged his name,
And fiercely the red wine sparkled, and kindled my
blood aflame :

'Death! death!' I madly shouted,—but he came
not to my call;
Called and uncalled he cometh to the cottage or
palace-hall.

"And many a year I crossed, lad, the waves through
storm and shine;
Heard the whistling storms, or summer sighs, come
laden fresh with brine;
Strange lands I saw, strange people; till our vessel,
one autumn day,—
Six-and-twenty years ago, lad,—put in to your vil-
lage-bay.

"None knew the stooping shoulders—none knew the
sunburnt brow;
The home I once held in their hearts, lad, 'twas all
forgotten now.
No, lad, I wasn't sorry,—'twould have troubled my
darling, I ween,
To know that I still was yearning, sick at heart, for
what *might* have been.

"Not sorry they didn't know me,—they, nor the
sexton grim,—

A rough old man, who hired me to ring the bells for
him.

'Marriage and death, you must ring,' said he, 'for
the living as well as the dead.'

'Marriage? death is a merrier tune! but bread must
be earned,' I said.

"So each Sunday I chimed the bells; and saw
through the belfry-bars

Down yonder the linden-shadows darkening the
daisy-stars;

I saw the men and matrons and the maidens sweep
along,—

And—there, as of old, I saw her, lad, my darling,
amid the throng.

"Speak? why not speak to her, lad? 'twas all too
late, too late,—

I was fallen—may-be driven—I know not!—gone
from my true estate:

My hands were hard with labour now, that were born
for ease and rest,—

‘ All for the best we parted !’ great God ! was it all
for the best ?

“ Too late ! yes, ’twas all too late ! once only I saw
her again,

When the summer roses held red lips to the cool soft
silver rain ;

A manly form at her side, lad,—a goodly pair to see,
And blithe we rang their wedding-bells,—but my
heart rang heavily.

“ Once again after two long years,—he had taken
her far away,—

She came to the green fresh churchyard one morn in
the heart of May,

Came, where of old the lindens had drooped on her
glossy head,

Came, but her lips were mute now ! dead, lad, my
darling was dead !

“Then not ring the bells to-night!—the last night
of the year,—

Because my arms are not so strong and so brawny as
they were?

Not ring the bells, when I know each weary month
that dies

Brings me nearer the hour when I lay me, lad, low
where my darling lies?

“There—lad, the Old Year’s dead! O’er the snow
the cold winds sing

His dirge through the creaking branches,—’tis the
last year’s knell I shall ring.

Let me lie, when I’m gone, ’neath the lindens, where
we stood in the long-ago,

When a dear face shone that sleepeth, lad, soft where
the daisies grow.”

AT EVENFALL.

My love, he stands upon the quay ;
" What shall I bring, sweetheart, to thee ?
For many a rare land shall I see."

And the red day is a-dying.

" O nothing but thyself I crave !"
And then his farewell-kiss he gave ;
And the brig dropt down the harbour-wave ;

And the red day is a-dying.

Beyond the lighthouse, on yonder hill,
The brig dropt down (I see it still) ;
And cold the wind sprang up, and chill ;

And the red day was a-dying.

And every eve, beyond the town,
I watch, 'neath the lighthouse old and brown,
For the brig that long ago dropt down,
While the red day was a-dying.

'Tis years since I my love did see ;
But now he stands upon the quay,
And near him what he brings to me ;—
And the sad day is a-dying.

A maiden—and he is hers alone ;
Mine own love is no more mine own !
And I must e'en go moan and moan !
And the sad day is a-dying !

SONGS FROM "FAIR ROSAMOND."*

(QUEEN ELEANOR.)

O WORSE than crownless is the queen,
With whom this knowledge maketh lair :
' The love, whereon she once did lean,
Hath left her, passing otherwhere !'

O better press, upon the bier,
The icy lip, the white cold hand ;
O better shed the scalding tear
For lord sent to the Silent Land ;

Than see those lips, while red with life,
Grow cold, where once they used to kiss ;
Than hear the well-loved name of wife
Be but a name, mean nothingness !

* A forthcoming musical Cantata by J. L. Roechel.

O better wander, sad and lone,
 Through widowed palace-halls, and mourn
 The lost dear king, glad days long gone,
 The lonely journey to life's bourn,

Than live to learn, as I have learnt,
 A heart estranged, whence love hath fled—
 Once bright, but now to ashes burnt,
 Sad ashes, cold, and gray, and dead !

(HUGH OF EARDISLEY.)

THE long years slowly come and go,
 Old sorrows die, and new are born ;
 I yearn, clothed on with saddest woe,
 At morn for night, at night for morn.
 ' My love is worse than dead to me ;'
 Yet for this thought shall Death atone,
 If, when on earth we cease to be,
 In heaven she claim me hers alone !

The years may slowly come and go,
 Once dead they are for ever dead ;

Our death shall teach us sure to know
 Life's riddles, now so hardly read.
 So, when Death calls her, haply she
 The true love from the false will own :—
 Hence, doubts! my comfort this shall be :
 ' In heaven she claims me hers alone!'

(HUGH OF EARDISLEY.)

WHEN I have dole, sweet maiden,
 And thou art glad and gay,
 I'll pray no storms, woe-laden,
 E'er cloud thy golden May;
 Or my cold dark December
 E'er cause thee to remember
 That I have dole, sweet maiden,
 When thou art glad and gay!

When gone is all of gladness,
 That lived when love was young;
 When real tones of sadness
 Ring from thy now false tongue,

Then, 'mid thy cold December,
Thou haply wilt remember
Somewhat of all the gladness
We had when love was young!

(ROSAMOND.)

LILIES, given by loving hands,
Plucked but yester-eventide,
Where, through yonder quiet lands,
We two wandered side by side!
Moonlight, letting from the height
Silvern arrows o'er us slide,
When we cleft the hush of night,
We two wandering side by side!
Now be near me, when with rest
Cometh sleep to lay me low,
Silver lilies on my breast,
Moonlight on my couch of snow!

Lilies, ye will gleam and blow,
When, through yon still lands, shall glide
Phantoms of the long-ago,
When we wandered side by side!

Moonlight, thou wilt kiss his face
 When the earth my face shall hide,
 Mind him of the short glad space,
 When we wandered side by side!
 So, when I in death have rest,
 This is all on earth I crave:
 Two white lilies for my breast,
 Moonlight for my forest-grave!

(LULLABY.)

DAY is dying! cool sweet winds
 Over woods and lake are borne;
 Eve in filmy fetters binds
 Earth, with din and labour worn.
 Lady, close each weary eye,
 Soothed by this our lullaby,
 Lullaby from maidens fond:
 Slumber, lady Rosamond!

Slumber in thy scented bed!
 Take the quiet of the night!

Slumber, little goldenhead,
Golden head on pillows white!
Hark! the wind, thy lattice nigh,
Sings a crooning lullaby!
Answer birds from woods beyond:
Slumber, lady Rosamond!

Slumber thou, a rose atween
Silver lilies' stainless snow,
Very rose, and very queen
Of each subject rose below!
Hark! late shepherd-pipings soft
Sweeten yon fair-blossomed croft,
Whispering with thy maidens fond:
Slumber, lady Rosamond!

THE MESSAGE O'ER THE SEA.*

I ROAM the kirkyard's lush green grass
Above the dreamless dead ;
I watch the silver starlets pass
In quiet overhead ;
The long waves, rolling fresh and fair,
Kiss yonder flowery lea,
And soft the mellow night-winds bear
A message o'er the sea.

It tells me of a barque that sped
To realms of ice and snow,
It minds me of the tears I shed
At parting years ago ;

* Set to music by J. L. Roeckel.

At parting from my sailor-love,
Who sailed away from me :
God guard them, from His home above,
Brave toilers on the sea !

And haply when he swingeth high
Upon the creaking mast,
When homeless winds howl, hurrying by,
And foam-curves eddy fast,
He thinks him of his village-home,
The kirkyard and the lea,
And dreams he hears, amid the foam,
My message o'er the sea.

THE PAST.*

THE past is past, and over,
The old sweet love is dead ;
Hearts are for nothing counted,
Thy vows are all unsaid !
O when again I meet thee,
Though not as once we met,
Haply one will remember,
And haply one forget !

And, when our feet may wander,
Together or alone,
To old familiar places,
So dear in days ago ;

* Set to music by J. L. Roeckel.

When sea is dark with tempest,
When eyes with tears are wet,
Haply one will remember,
And haply one forget!

When looks again seem joyous,
And hearts to sorrow steeled;
When all around may fancy
Long hours of anguish healed;
When sighs are heard no longer,
Nor eyes with tears are wet;
Haply one will remember,
And haply one forget!

CHRISTOBEL.

THE long waves rustle in the reeds,
The river's breast is choked with weeds,

Ah miserie !

And, 'mid the curst reeds of the bank,
I feel the slow ooze creeping dank,

Woe, woe is me !

A weary chain is round me thrown,
The chain is fettered to a stone ;
They brought and left me here alone,
Unheard to make unheeded moan.

Ah miserie !

My Ladye's arms were lithe and fair,
Her hair was as the angels' hair.

Her bosom white as frozen snow,
Her bright eyes slew me with their glow.

•
And oh! her face was sweet to see;
I lay in dalliance at her knee,
And, while a sweet song murmured she,
God's hours slipt on so pleasantly
—So pleasantly!

The gay dream snapt: across the foam,
A stranger took her to his home.

Ah miserie!

And there, within her silk-hung halls,
She kept her proud lord's festivals.

Woe, woe is me!

Years passed; and I was at her side;
And, seeing her, content to bide
In servant's garb, my name to hide:
God help me! would that I had died!

Ah miserie!

* * * *

The air was rich with flowers of June:
It was a golden afternoon.

And, lapt in sleep, my Ladye lay,
On couch with purple broidered gay.

Over her lacework pillows white,
Her tresses' golden glory bright,
Soft-showering, strove to veil from sight
Her slumbrous bosom heaving light,
—Fair Christobel.

Below, cool sheltered from the glow,
I paced a marble portico,

And sang a little string of lays
She used to sing in buried days
(—Sweet long-ago !)

She stirred ! she started from her sleep !
Dim dread and trembling o'er her creep ;
Her veins in wild pulsation leap :
My voice came to her low and deep
Up from the marble portico.

Down stole a dark-eyed eastern maid
And stood beside me in the shade ;

From whose ripe lips—a joyous word—
My Ladye's sweet behests I heard.

“Go, fetch yon minstrel from below,
Whose voice comes to me deep and low,
Down in the marble portico.”—
Nor could I gladly choose but go
To Christobel.

I left the portico's dim gloom,
And passed into her fragrant room,

And on her couch, I saw her there,
Fairest of all her maidens fair.

A robe unto her white feet rolled
Of whitest samite wrought with gold,
And kissed with brodered blue-fringed fold
Her warm sweet limbs of lissom mould;
Fair Christobel!

Soft on the scented silence rung
The silver mandate from her tongue.

And then again I sang the lays
She used to sing in buried days.

Still, as of old, her eyes were bright ;
Still, as of old, her bosom white ;
Still shone her hair with lustrous light,
—Yet was she changed, though not to sight.

Sweet Christobel !

I sang : a big tear dimmed her eye,
Her dear breast trembled with a sigh,

Ah miserie !

Ah God ! to see her weep ! and be
Myself a tearful memory !

Woe, woe is me !

A memory of a happier time
Spent in a far-off precious clime
When o'er us pealed the fairy chime
Of golden love's sweet dreamful prime.

Ah miserie !

I sang : I knew I still was loved ;
Her old great love awoke and moved,

Stirring her veins, and passion-pale
Her cheek and dim eyes told the tale.

Vain now sad anguish of regret,
Vain that our eyes with tears are wet,
Vain the wild wish we ne'er had met
—God! can a real love forget?

She wept: the tearful trouble rushed,
Her sad pale hands the pillows crushed:

Ah Christobel!

Bruising the flowers that lay in light,
Red rose on bosom silver-white

I loved so well.

A breeze woke from the lake below
Rocking the lilies to and fro,
Passed up the marble portico,
And reached us fragrant, light and low,

Fair Christobel!

Stirred the silk curtains and swept on—
Faint requiem for days ago:

Then fell : then died : my voice once more
Broke on the quiet's dreamy shore.

Not long—came voices through the place,
Came deadly paleness in her face,
White as the whiteness of her lace ;
Came clang, came footsteps on apace ;

Came hurrying fierce an armèd horde,
Rough henchmen of her haughty lord,
'Mid trembling maidens din of steel,
'Mid rich soft robes the iron heel !

Woe, woe is me !

I saw her rude lord's rude hand prest,
Bruising the rose-bloom of her breast,
That might—ah God !—have been my rest :
They drag me forth—his curst behest—

Ah miserie !

Down to a dank mere's reedy shore :
I saw my darling never more,

Ah miserie !

Sooth 'twas of woe and darkest gloom
That cruel hands had forged our doom,
Woe, woe is me !

And round me is a curst chain thrown,
The chain is fettered to a stone :
They brought and left me here alone,
Unheard to make unheeded moan.
Ah miserie ! ah miserie !

DANS LA BELLE NORMANDIE.

I.

THERE lived two maidens by the sea,
In a castle of pleasant Normandie;

Fairer were they than bard may tell—
Lilian and Isabel.

And the people would kiss their garments' hem,
Yet never a wooer had come to them;

Till once, at the burst of a sun-bright day
In the happy heart of flower-sweet May,

Came, over the sea, a goodly man—
A young knight wooing to Lilian.

And a many times by the shore they went,
By greenwood, terrace, and battlement,

Talking in voices light and low :
But Lilian loved him not, I trow !

- And the good knight Brian his tale did tell
Of hopeless love to Isabel ;

Nor deemed her upturned cheeks, and dim
Sad eyes were sad for love of him.

So, when fair June was in her grave,
Homeward his bark the white seas clave ;

And lone, through her chamber lattice-bar,
Wept Isabel, and watched afar.

II.

Time slipt : and when the autumn fell,
Came a wooer wooing to Isabel :

Over the waves, from a fair far land,
In a golden bark, Sir Hildebrand.

And a many times, beside the sea,
Sir Hildebrand lay at her knee :

And nobly there his tale did tell ;
But silent, pale, sat Isabel.

While tear on tear fell from her eye,—
Bright beads in sorrow's rosary.

For the glamour of the sweet days dead,
And Sir Brian she remembered.

But so it fell that love began
To make his home with Lilian :

So brave, she thought, she had never seen
So brave a knight, such noble mien :

And all seemed sunshine in the land
When she was with Sir Hildebrand.

III.

The castle-gardens in slumber lay,
It was cool night of a sultry day :

And, beneath the wan moon, hand in hand,
Passed Lilian and Sir Hildebrand.

And his heart now waxed hot, now cold,
When he heard the words that Lilian told :

" 'Tis vain, Sir Knight, to woo her thine,
She has plighted her troth—this sister mine,

" To a young brave knight from over the sea :
In a year their bridal feast will be."

He heard ; and was mute—Sir Hildebrand ;
He crushed the red rose in his hand :

He turned : he strode about the place ;
A crimson glow was in his face.

And O and loudly did he cry,
" A fool—a thrice-fed fool am I !

" The dream is snapt ! and now I know
I did but dream I loved her so.

" I love not the love of another man :
'Tis thee I love, sweet Lilian."

And then again I sang the lays
She used to sing in buried days.

Still, as of old, her eyes were bright ;
Still, as of old, her bosom white ;
Still shone her hair with lustrous light,
—Yet was she changed, though not to sight.

Sweet Christobel !

I sang : a big tear dimmed her eye,
Her dear breast trembled with a sigh,

Ah miserie !

Ah God ! to see her weep ! and be
Myself a tearful memory !

Woe, woe is me !

A memory of a happier time
Spent in a far-off precious clime
When o'er us pealed the fairy chime
Of golden love's sweet dreamful prime.

Ah miserie !

I sang : I knew I still was loved ;
Her old great love awoke and moved,

Fairer are they than bard may tell—
But passing sweet is Isabel.

Her gold hair ripples to her knee,
She is thinking of one beyond the sea.

* * * *

Eve: and the wedding-guests are gone,
And the knight and his bride sit far alone

In their bower, where fresh the sea-winds blow,
And pale sits Isabel below.

There came a footstep through the place;
There bent a shadow o'er her face;

A man's voice through the silence cried;
There stood Sir Brian at her side.

"So she is wed! Ah God!" said he,
And his voice was the voice of agony:

"I dreamed—fond fool in heart and eyes!—
By noble deeds of high emprise,

And then again I sang the lays
She used to sing in buried days.

Still, as of old, her eyes were bright ;
Still, as of old, her bosom white ;
Still shone her hair with lustrous light,
—Yet was she changed, though not to sight.

Sweet Christobel !

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Ah miserie !

I sang : I knew I still was loved ;
Her old great love awoke and moved,

Stirring her veins, and passion-pale
Her cheek and dim eyes told the tale.

Vain now sad anguish of regret,
Vain that our eyes with tears are wet,
Vain the wild wish we ne'er had met
—God! can a real love forget?

She wept: the tearful trouble rushed,
Her sad pale hands the pillows crushed:

Ah Christobel!

Bruising the flowers that lay in light,
Red rose on bosom silver-white

I loved so well.

A breeze woke from the lake below
Rocking the lilies to and fro,
Passed up the marble portico,
And reached us fragrant, light and low,

Fair Christobel!

Stirred the silk curtains and swept on—
Faint requiem for days ago:

And then again I sang the lays
She used to sing in buried days.

Still, as of old, her eyes were bright ;
Still, as of old, her bosom white ;
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A breeze woke from the lake below
Rocking the lilies to and fro,
Passed up the marble portico,
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Fair Christobel!

Stirred the silk curtains and swept on—
Faint requiem for days ago:

Then fell : then died : my voice once more
Broke on the quiet's dreamy shore.

Not long—came voices through the place,
Came deadly paleness in her face,
White as the whiteness of her lace ;
Came clang, came footsteps on apace ;

Came hurrying fierce an armèd horde,
Rough henchmen of her haughty lord,
'Mid trembling maidens din of steel,
'Mid rich soft robes the iron heel !

Woe, woe is me !

I saw her rude lord's rude hand prest,
Bruising the rose-bloom of her breast,
That might—ah God !—have been my rest :
They drag me forth—his curst behest—

Ah miserie !

Down to a dank mere's reedy shore :
I saw my darling never more,

Ah miserie !

Sooth 'twas of woe and darkest gloom
That cruel hands had forged our doom,
Woe, woe is me !

And round me is a curst chain thrown,
The chain is fettered to a stone :
They brought and left me here alone,
Unheard to make unheeded moan.
Ah miserie ! ah miserie !

To the oath he sware (when to her feet
Came Bertram wooing to Marguérite):—

‘He ne’er should wed her, nor should stand,
Save unto death, upon their land.’

But, when he saw his marred sad face,
His wrath did yield a little space;

And Sir Bertram to a cell they bare,
And his half-crushed life, beneath their care,

Came back, with strength to every limb;
But the maiden heard no word of him.

* * * *

So, on a day, by the King’s command,
He launched to sail to his own land;

Nor deemed one, through her lattice-bar,
Did watch his canvas spread from far;

While, what though seeing, wist not she
Whose bark’s spread canvas flecked the sea.

And a many times by the shore they went,
By greenwood, terrace, and battlement,

Talking in voices light and low :
But Lilian loved him not, I trow !

And the good knight Brian his tale did tell
Of hopeless love to Isabel ;

Nor deemed her upturned cheeks, and dim
Sad eyes were sad for love of him.

So, when fair June was in her grave,
Homeward his bark the white seas clave ;

And lone, through her chamber lattice-bar,
Wept Isabel, and watched afar.

II.

Time slipt : and when the autumn fell,
Came a wooer wooing to Isabel :

Over the waves, from a fair far land,
In a golden bark, Sir Hildebrand.

And scatter garlands at her feet,
The Queen of Beauty, Marguérite!

"O Hugh, my lord," she cries, "I pray,
O enter not the lists to-day!"

"Have thou no fear, my ladye sweet,
My timid trembling Marguérite!

"My heart is high, my heart is gay,
And I will shiver a lance to-day!"

* * * *

Enters the lists a stranger knight,
His vizor hides his face from sight;

His armour sable, and his shield—
A broken reed on azure field.

"O, who will shiver a lance with me?"
Sir Hugh, he answers merrily,

"O, I will shiver a lance with thee!"
—And they rode and clashed right furiously.

* * * *

Sir Hugh hath hurled him from his steed,
But he kneels to staunch the wounds that bleed.

“O bear him to my ladye’s bower !
Christ save him of His own dear power !

“So brave a knight I ne’er did see.
Miserere Domine !”

VI.

The light is fading from his eyes,
The stranger knight a-dying lies ;

And anear him Margu rite doth stand,
Binding his wounds with trembling hand.

His weak spent fingers vainly feel
For somewhat ’neath his coat of steel.

’Tis found ! the treasure of his care,
A little lock of golden hair !

O let him see it in his woe,—
The lock she gave him long ago !

One look ! his white lips scarce can stir,
To bid his long farewell to her.

One word ! so dear to him and sweet,
He dies—and murmurs “ Marguérite ! ”

VII.

They laid him soft beside the sea,
Where storm and shine come changefully.

And o'er the shattered stranger knight,
Sir Hugh wept as a brother might ;

While who might say what anguish beat
'Gainst thy fond heart, poor Marguérite ?

They laid him in his nameless grave,
Anigh the washing of the wave ;

Where oft came Marguérite to view
His bed, whose name *she* only knew,

And gaze upon his carven shield—
A broken reed on azure field !

FROM THE GERMAN.

THE QUEEN.

THERE lived an aged monarch,
His heart was sick, his locks were gray ;
And the poor old monarch wedded
A maiden young and gay.

There was a lovely page-boy,
Golden his hair, and light his mien :
And the silken train he carried,
The train of the youthful queen.

Dost know the old, old story,
So sad, and yet so sweet, I ween ?
They must die, because the page-boy
Too dearly loved the queen !

(Heine.

THE CHAPEL.

FAR aloft, the quiet chapel

Looketh downward to the vale ;

Gay, beneath, by stream and meadow,

Sings the shepherd on the gale.

Hark, the chapel-bell rings mournful !

Hark, the choir chants low and sad !

Listening, silent, sits the shepherd,

Hushed his carols blithe and glad.

See, they bear to peaceful burial

Them, *once* gayest of the vale ;

Shepherd-boy, a day there cometh,

When those notes o'er thee shall wail !

(*Uthland.*)

FAREWELL.

“FARE-THEE-WELL!” thou dost not know
What the grief that sad word bringeth;
Face unmoved and void of woe,
Lips whence mocking laughter ringeth.

“Fare-thee-well!” oft o’er and o’er
Lips of mine that word have spoken,
Till with sorrow, biting sore,
My sad heart that word hath broken!

(*Morike.*)

THE THREE LAYS.

IN his lofty hall sat Sifrid the king,
"Your fairest lay, ye singers, sing!"
And forth from the crowd a youth did stand,
At his side a sword, a harp in hand.

"Three lays I know : the first, I ween,
In thy mind hath long forgotten been :
My brethren hast thou foully slain !
And the burden rings, *hast foully slain !*

"The second lay I have pondered o'er,
In the dark of night, 'mid the tempest's roar :
Thou must fight with me to life or death !
And the burden rings, *to life or death !*"

Then he set his harp on the festal board ;
And swift from its home each drew his sword,
And with fierce clash long they fought amain,
Till the king in his lofty hall lay slain.

“ Now sing I the third, the fairest lay,
Untired I sing it for aye and a day :
King Sifrid lies dead in his own red blood !
And the burden rings, *in his own red blood !*”

(*Uhland.*)

THE VOYAGE.

I LEANT against the mast, and told
Each billow hurrying by :
Adieu, mine own sweet fatherland,
My bark bounds merrily !

We passed my darling's seashore-home,
The casement glimmered bright ;
Ay me ! no welcome hand was waved
To greet my straining sight.

O tears, dim not these eyes of mine ;
Yield not, O heart, to care ;
E'en though thy grievous burden seem
Too great for thee to bear !

(Heine.)

THE LEAF IN THE BOOK.

THERE is a little old aunt of mine,
With silvern hair and thin ;
And a little well-worn book she hath,
And a withered leaf therein.

And withered and sere the old white hands,
That plucked it in buried years ;
Ah ! why, when she opes that little book,
Are the old eyes dim with tears ?

(Anastasius Grün.)

RECOLLECTION.

AWAY the darkened lattice
Still sat we, and alone ;
I heard her heart's quick beating,
Her hand lay in mine own.

Then wept she, wept she, plaining ;
Her warm tears seemed to say,
" Forget not thy true maiden,
Though thou art far away !

" The world is wide and lonely,
My hopes live all on thee ;
For thou art father, mother,
Art all in all to me !"

THE QUEEN.

THERE lived an aged monarch,
His heart was sick, his locks were gray ;
And the poor old monarch wedded
A maiden young and gay.

There was a lovely page-boy,
Golden his hair, and light his mien :
And the silken train he carried,
The train of the youthful queen.

Dost know the old, old story,
So sad, and yet so sweet, I ween ?
They must die, because the page-boy
Too dearly loved the queen !

(*Heine.*)

CONGRATULATORY ODE.

*Recited in the Theatre, Oxford, at the Installation of the Most Honourable
The Marquis of Salisbury, Chancellor of the University.
June 21st, 1870.*

'Tis the white day, whereon we call
And lead him to his honoured seat,
—The day whereon, within this place
Of learning, we with welcomes greet,
And hold him ours a little space,
—Him, the chief-captain of us all!
And thou our captain com'st, with gracious ear
Inclining to that voice, that bade thee deign to hear:

“O leave the warring of debate,
The murmurous wranglings of the state;
And pass, and seek gray walls of ancient love,
Where thou, in times of yore,
Beneath the shadows hoar,

Lapped in the cloistered calm of Academe,
And mazy network of the scholar's dream,
 Wert wont to move!
Leave thy broad lands to smile to their own sky,
 Thy giant trees
To wave their arms, green-glancing, loyally,
 About thy leas!

“Leave thy green parks, and lordly halls,
Whose leafy aisles, and bannered walls,
 In days that are, and days that were,
 Sang ‘Hail’ to dames of royal birth;
By Isis-wave are scenes as fair,
 Are well-stored homes of Wisdom's worth;
 By Isis-wave are skies as bright,
To woo thee from thy city-care;
And Isis, with her domes and towers,
Isled in old gardens sweet of flowers,
 And men of name and fame invite
Thine honoured presence 'mid them there!”

So thou art come among us: come,
 To fill the sad void left by death,

That well might strike the singer dumb,
And loving lips make fail of breath!
Yet vain were words! words have no power
To add one stone unto the tower
Of honour that himself did build:
'Twere vain to crown his crown'd fame;
He left a name
Whereof the gold 'twere vain to gild!
—His name, who, armed with Wisdom's shield,
His way among the foremost won,
Hearing, aye ringing o'er the field,
The cry that rang in days ago,
"On! Stanley, on!"

Sit thou within his vacant chair;
Yet drive not Memory hence, who sitteth there;
But take her hand, that we,
Who mourn his loss, may see
Thou feelest graciously
Unto the noble dead, whose mantle falls on thee!
Nor dost begrudge the tears we shed
For him—the Statesman, Scholar, Friend, and Head,

In whose bestead
Thou art hailed here to-day,—
Here, where, amid these reverend piles,
Sweet ladies hold sweet reign awhile,
With silvery voice, and golden smiles,—
Hailed, 'mid these garlands gay,
Gleaming through old and gray
Garden-girt halls,—
Hailed with loud welcome-calls,
'Captain of Learning's mighty host,'
'Our honoured guest,'—but O loved most,
In that thou art a son, brought home
To her, who nursed thee in the days
Now shrouded 'neath time's thickening haze;
A nurseling, after long long years brought home
To her, who made thee what thou art,
—Statesman and Scholar, such as he,
Shaping thy heart
On mould of true nobility!

Thou wilt not blame our fond regret,
Thou, in his room among us set,

Thou wilt not wish us to forget,
Thou wilt not chide what eyes are wet
 For him, whom we are orphaned of ;
But deem, that, as we held him dear,
So thee, the chosen one to wear
 The crown he wore among us here,
Now crown we with like honour and like love !
 Well-knowing, as thou hold'st his place,
 That thou wilt give us aye to see
 Reflected, wisdom, truth, and grace,
 —The image of his form in thee,
—In thee the twin-type of the noble dead,
Statesman, and Scholar, Friend, and honoured **Head** !

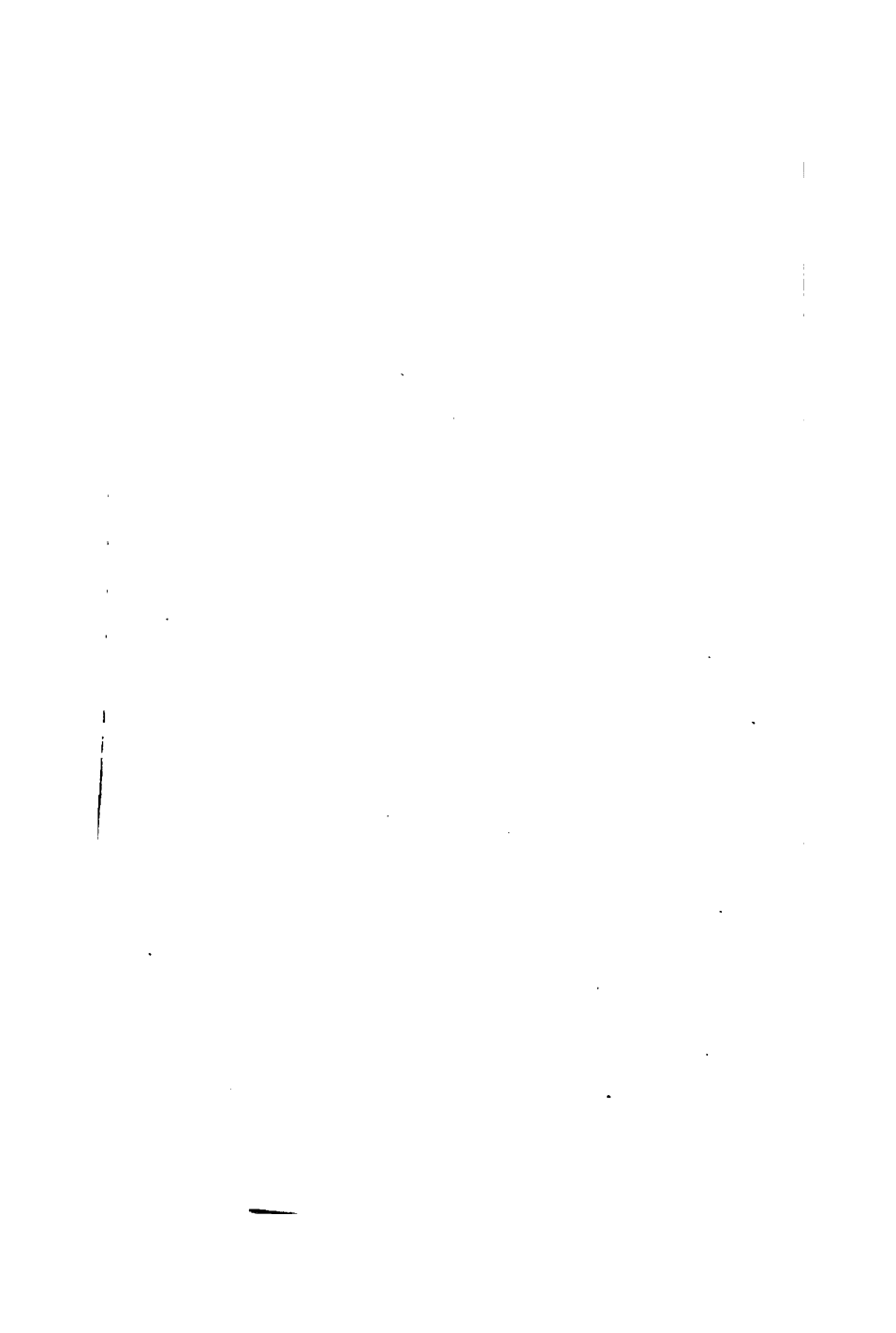
NOTES.

THE poems "Muriel" and "A Glimpse of Sunlight" are based respectively on Hans Andersen's "Little Mermaid," and a tale by Tom Hood, the younger.

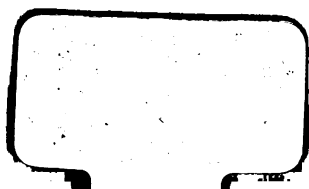
"The Hearts of Saxony" was written '67, which date shows to what period in that country's history the poem points. The feelings of the Saxons towards the Prussians were bitter then, but short-lived as they were bitter. Witness the present war in Europe.

ERRATA.

On page	2,	for "when as"	read "whenas."
"	32,	"rung"	"rang."
"	88,	"a dying"	"a-dying."
"	99,	"vying"	"vieing."
"	113,	"gate;"	"gate!"







the 'information' and 'communication' fields. The 'information' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, creation, organisation, storage, retrieval, dissemination and use of information, and the social, cultural, economic and political contexts in which these activities take place. (p. 1)

The 'communication' field is defined as:

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The 'information science' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, creation, organisation, storage, retrieval, dissemination and use of information and communication, and the social, cultural, economic and political contexts in which these activities take place. (p. 1)

The 'information studies' field is defined as:

...the study of the nature, creation, organisation, storage, retrieval, dissemination and use of information and communication, and the social, cultural, economic and political contexts in which these activities take place. (p. 1)

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